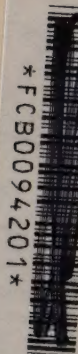


FIA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE



FCB0094201

THE BIBLE OF THE EXPOSITOR AND THE EVANGELIST

NEW TESTAMENT
VOLUME 13.

PHILIPPIANS TO THESSALONIANS

CENTRAL FLORIDA
BIBLE COLLEGE
LIBRARY

BY

FLORIDA
CHRISTIAN
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

W. B. RILEY. D.D.

**Pastor First Baptist Church,
Minneapolis, Minn.**

Author of "The Evolution of the Kingdom", "Inspiration or Evolution", "Christ, the Incomparable", "Revival Sermons", etc.

Published by the
UNION GOSPEL PRESS
CLEVELAND, OHIO

COPYRIGHT, 1930
BY
UNION GOSPEL PRESS

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
Foreword	5
I. Paul's Letter to the Philippians	7
II. Christ, the Incomparable, Philippians 2:5-11	27
III. A Pastor's Appeal, Philippians 2:12- 16	45
IV. The Most Essential Knowledge, Philippians 3:10	61
V. The Sovereignty of Character, Phi- lippians 3:13, 14	81
VI. Christ Versus the Pope, Colossians 1:18	95
VII. The Church After Nineteen Hundred Years, Colossians 1:18-24	113
VIII. Philosophy the Foe of Christianity, Colossians 2:8, 9	137
IX. Some Satisfactory Models, I Thessa- lonians 1:1—4:14	155
X. The Return, the Resurrection and the Rapture, I Thessalonians 4:13-17	179
XI. Heaven and Our Celestial Flight, I Thessalonians 4:13-17	197
XII. Preparation for the Second Appear- ance, I Thessalonians 5:1-20	217

*Handsh.
Necess.
90-*

XIII.	Sobriety—Giving Wide Berth to Saloons, I Thessalonians 5:5	233
XIV.	Crime and the Ku Klux Klan, I Thessalonians 5:21-23	251
XV.	II Thessalonians, An Outline	273
XVI.	World Conditions, the Challenge of the Church, II Thessalonians, chapter 2	279

FOREWORD

IN this thirteenth volume on the New Testament, we include Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians.

The volume will necessarily be large in comparison with its companion volumes, and yet much smaller than the Books invite. It is little short of a grief to let II Thessalonians go to the press without a comparatively full treatment. A careful reading will suggest the richness of this volume and excite in the mind of the reader a sense of disappointment. We hope, however, that the outline of that Book, herein given, will incite to study, and, on the part of preachers and Sunday School teachers particularly, lead to a filling in and a filling up of this outline to final satisfaction.

We are a bit reconciled to letting this volume go to the press in this form owing to the somewhat fuller treatment characterizing both Philippians and I Thessalonians.

It should be known to the reader that these volumes do not occur in the order of their origin. Colossians, which precedes Thessalonians, was probably written ten years later or about A. D. 64; 54 being the commonly accepted year of the Thessalonian authorship.

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Corinth as we have already shown. The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians seems to have followed very shortly, possibly immediately upon the return of the postman, who bore to them the first and brought from them a report.

The date of Philippians is not easily fixed. It seems to have been a prison Letter and probably emanated from the Apostle's pen in the same year with the Epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians.

It is easy to understand that imprisonment for such a man as Paul would be both an occasion and an opportunity of writing letters. He would have time for the same, and his heart-interest in and heart-affection for his brethren in the faith, together with his counsels concerning creed and conduct, as written into these Letters, would express at once his deep and abiding concern and convey to them what was given to him of the Holy Ghost.

There is little or no attempt made in this book to outline the volumes treated. On the contrary, we have followed the uniform custom of this series in giving to our readers our pulpit ministrations. The sermons are printed as they were delivered, save for such additions as characterize the inspiration of speech, and such omissions as are incident to the failures of memory.

CHAPTER I.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

I N our introduction to this volume we have called attention to the fact that Paul, on his second missionary journey, probably in the year 52 A. D., visited this people. He went in answer to the vision of a man seemingly standing in Macedonia and calling, "*Come over * * and help us*".

Philippi was rather unpromising for it did not even hold a synagogue at the time of the Apostle's visit. But certain Jews had a place of assembly and of prayer (*Acts 16:13*); and there, as now at places of prayer, women gathered in larger numbers than did the men; and Lydia was among the Philippi converts.

It will be remembered that this was also the place where the girl with the spirit of divination was exorcised; and

"when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

"And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city,

"And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

"And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

*"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely" (*Acts 16:19-23*).*

In other words, it was a city in which they suffered both indignity and physical agony; and yet, as so often with God's servants, it was the place also of peculiar triumph, for it was at Philippi when at "*midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises*

unto God", that "suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken" and the doors of the same were forced ajar and even everyone's bonds were loosened; and where Paul, instead of escaping, preached to the jailor and baptized him and his household that night.

The rulers, alarmed at what had occurred, sent the sarjeants to set them free. But Paul replied,

"They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out."

"And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans."

"And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city" (Acts 16: 37-40).

Instead, they quit the prison to enter the house of Lydia, where doubtless this Philippian Church was born. Later, probably A. D. 64, while in the Roman jail Paul penned this Letter.

We have, then, the setting of this Epistle; and in the light of these events, we can the more intelligently interpret it.

The Standard Encyclopædia says, "The Epistle is not capable of any logical analysis."

You will pardon us if we dissent from that view. We believe that here, as in other of the Pauline Epistles, there is a logical procedure. At any rate we rest this assertion upon the following analysis: The Ground of Joy, The Gospel of Joy, and The Gems of Joy.

THE GROUND OF JOY

Adamson, in the "Life of Joseph Parker", quotes from the great London preacher these words concerning Paul's Letter to the Philippians: "Joy is the key-note of this melodious Letter. Why should this be accounted a remarkable circumstance? Might not joy sing in an Apostle's heart as well as in that of garlanded conquerors and throned kings? The remarkable fact is this, that the man who thus rejoices and summons other persons to kindred gladness is a prisoner. In his external condition there is nothing to call forth joy of heart. The criminal's chain is on the author's hand, and even on that symbol of degradation he has no curse to pronounce. So happy a man never was bound to the throne of Nero. The chain binds him rather to the Cross of Jesus than to the dungeon of the Emperor. You expected the moan of angry discontent from the wronged bondsman, and lo! a happy song is on his lips. You expected to see a man bowed down with grief, and lo! a plumed head is lifted up in sunshine. You thought his Letter would have been deep-bordered with the blackness of mourning, and behold, it is fringed as with refined silver!"

You do well, then, to ask for the occasions of this joy. You will find them in the Epistle itself.

First of all **he feels the inspiration of pleasant memories.**

Have you ever stopped to reflect upon the fact that suffering and anguish are soon forgotten, while the memory of pleasure abides? If Paul could sing even while his hands were manacled, his feet in stocks and his back bleeding, as he did

in the Philippian jail, it is little wonder that as he later reflected upon that fateful, yet glorious night, he should forget these agonies of body, and remember only the marvel of Divine intervention, the sudden earthquake, the shaking off of their manacles, the swinging of the doors upon their hinges, the excited sergeant, saying, "I am commissioned to let you go"; and beyond all, the jailor and his household falling upon their faces and asking to be shown the way of life, and later, baptized by the Apostle's hands!

When, to that never-to-be-forgotten night, there was added the experiences of the next morning, and the little assembly in Lydia's house, bursting with songs of praise and sending to Heaven their petitions of faith for the number of converts from Judaism to Christianity, the memory incites a shout! These are the experiences that lift the soul and live in memory's tablets, impressions that will never pass. It was of these that Paul was thinking when he wrote:

*"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,
"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making
request with joy,*

*"For your fellowship in the Gospel from the first day
until now;*

*"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath
begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of
Jesus Christ:*

*"Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, be-
cause I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my
bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel,
ye all are partakers of my grace.*

*"For God is my record, how greatly I long after you
all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.*

*"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more
and more in knowledge and in all judgment;*

*"That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye
may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;*

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:3-11).

It is a fact of observation that the older one grows the sweeter are the memories of past time. Memories, like wine, take on more delightful taste as the years ripen them. Such an experience, as that at Philippi, is the experience of a life-time! Few men ever saw such signal evidence of Divine care and proof of Divine power as Paul there experienced. No wonder he should remember it. No marvel that he should remember them, and thank God upon every remembrance of the place, and also the people, who became not his friends only, but followers of his Saviour and Lord.

It must have been some such an experience as that of which the poet, Father Ryan, wrote:

"One bright memory shines like a star
In the sky of my spirit forever;
And over my pathway it flashes afar
A radiance that perishes never.

"One bright memory—only one;
And I walk by the light of its gleaming;
It brightens my days, and when days are done
It shines in the night o'er my dreaming.

"One bright memory, whose golden rays
Illumine the gloom of my sorrows,
And I know that its luster will gladden my gaze
In the shadows of all my to-morrows.

"One bright memory—when I am sad
I lift up my eyes to its shining,
And the clouds pass away, and my spirit grows glad,
And my heart hushes all its repining.

"One bright memory; others have passed
Back into the shadows forever;
But it, far and fair, bright and true to the last,
Sheds a light that will pass away never.

"Shine on, shine always, thou star of my days!
And when Death's starless night gathers o'er me,
Beam brighter than ever adown on my gaze,
And light the dark valley before me."

Furthermore, Paul evidently feels the exaltation of sound reasoning (*Phil. 1:12-19*). He believed that God who had begun a good work in Philippi would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. He knew that they were, by sympathy, partakers alike in his pains, and in his defense of the faith; they also knew the grace of God. He believed that that which was happened unto him, namely, imprisonment at Philippi, would turn out to the furtherance of the Gospel, so that his sufferings would manifest his faith in Christ to all in the palace and in other places; and his brethren all about the world, seeing that he was enduring as a good soldier, would grow more bold themselves in speech and thereby Christ would be the more widely preached.

Life, in the largest sense, is not so much a matter of experience as it is a matter of intelligent treatment of experience. It is not so much a matter of sorrow or of joy as it is a sound reasoning concerning the uses of both. There are people who, whenever a vicious blow falls upon them, can no more interpret it than the beast does; they do not know how to extract the sweet from the bitter. They do not understand how it is possible that evil things can be made to work together for good. They have never discovered the intellectual alchemy that interprets the darkest hour to be the precursor of the coming day.

One's outlook upon life determines life itself. If that outlook is gloomy, life is morbid; if that

outlook is hopeful, life is a victory! We have long held the eagle as a type or symbol of the man who soars in thought; who can lift himself even beyond the clouds; who can go up into the shining sun even when a storm is beating against the mountain sides; but we are told that eagles caught and put into captivity sometimes mope and finally die of utter discouragement; chained and confined, they see no occasion of living. Good men and true often behave as the eagle does. When they are hampered they lose heart; when they are imprisoned they lose all prospect; when troubles come the spirit within grows surly and unexpectant. John the Baptist, great soul as he was, in prison questioned and doubted; but as one has written, "Paul's faith never wavered; his hope never waned; his joy was inexhaustible and perennial. To his ears the sentry's step passing up and down before his door reminded him of the care of Jesus Christ, guarding His children, standing sentry over them night and day."

You can do little against such a man. Even adverse circumstances for him are like a cold adverse wind for the migrating bird; it lifts him to higher levels and makes his migration to the land of eternal summer more swift and certain. If you would be a conqueror indeed, catch the key-note of this Epistle and in spite of all adverse circumstances, "*rejoice*"! Believe that evil can work out good; that bonds can proclaim the Gospel; and that even envy and strife may be over-ruled for the furtherance of the same; that all shall turn to one's faith and further one's final salvation, since "*to live is Christ, and to die is gain*".

Herein we find the expression of a Christian's faith.

"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

"But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

"Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

"And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

"That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel;

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.

"Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me" (1:20-30).

This Pauline expression has been an inspiration to the saints of all ages. Some one has called this "The Apostle's swan song" because it is the last of his Epistles, his latest declaration. I would prefer to call it the Apostle's Valedictory of Victory.

What can you do against the man who finds living, Christ; and death, gain? Your threatened heheading he meets with the statement that that might be better, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which

is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you". For the furtherance of your joy I will gladly endure the same. Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel; and let me, by the unfading lessons of my own experience, beseech you to be terrified in nothing by your adversaries, since they can never harm nor hurt you. If they behead you, it will bring you the more quickly to your Heavenly crown; if they make you to suffer, it will be in the interest of your soul's salvation. Be of good cheer; faith is the victory.

"Encamped along the hills of light,
Ye Christian soldiers, rise,
And press the battle ere the night
Shall veil the glowing skies.
Against the foe in vales below
Let all your strength be hurled;
Faith is the victory we know,
That overcomes the world."

So much for the Ground of Joy. Turn now to the Gospel of Joy. We find it in the second chapter of this Book.

THE GOSPEL OF JOY

Paul finds this in The Manner of Life, The Mind of Christ and the Method of Attainment.

First, in the manner of life.

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (2:1-4).

Beyond all question, of the elements that enter into a Christian's life, no one element exceeds that of sweetness. The Christian who lacks it may be a Christian still, but he will never remind you of Christ. I do not speak of those molluscou spirits that take no stand on any subject, and reveal no anger at any insult; but rather, of that indefinable aroma of gentleness and love, the very thing of which the Apostle is here writing, the sort that might be phrased as merciful, loving, lowly, unselfish—these are the characteristics emphasized in the verses quoted; and when found, they reflect the light of Christianity itself.

A writer tells us of an arc light over the entrance to his home, and how it grew unsteady, sputtering and blinking, went off and came on, and went off again. When this had continued for days he sent for a repair man and asked him, "What's the matter with that light?" To which the specialist answered, "Bad carbon. Impurities in it; little specks of non-conducting matter which interfere with the electric flow. I will take it away and bring you a perfect one." When he brought it he said, "You see, sir, there is all the difference between carbon that there is between folks; some are steady, serene, constant, and others are uncertain; they shine one moment and leave you in darkness the next." He might have added, and the reason, in both instances, is the same—little specks of dirt that interfere with the flow of the Christ spirit and tend to extinguish the light.

Again, This Gospel of joy depends on the mind of Christ.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

"But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

"And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name:

"That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (2:5-11).

The mind of Christ cannot be in us except Christ Himself indwells. When Baur attempted to show that this was not a Pauline Epistle because it lacked in the doctrinal, homiletical character of the great Apostle, he certainly overlooked what is here stated. Perhaps in the entire New Testament there is no statement of the essential Deity of Jesus that exceeds this

"Being in the form of God", He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

"But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

"And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name:

"That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father".

The man who denies His Deity must dispute this Epistle; the man who debates His humanity must doubt its teachings; the man who questions His atoning death or argues against His resurrection and ascension must forget this passage. No wonder a writer said, "It is the most doctrinally important statement in the New Testament."

But the major thought in it is, "*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*".

We are told that DeVinci, when he was yet a pupil, was asked by his old and famous master to complete a work upon which the master had begun, but with his failing strength could not complete. DeVinci declined at first, but for his master's sake finally yielded; and as he took up the brush he kneeled before the easel and prayed, "It is for the sake of my beloved master, that I implore skill and power for this task." Evidently the prayer was answered. His hand grew steady, his eye visualized the master's purpose. With an enthusiasm, never before known, he wrought; and when the work was finished the master's work was equalled, and as he looked upon the product he flung his arms about the boy and cried, "My son; I paint no more." But the Christian has a higher inspiration still, namely, the indwelling of the Master Himself; the possession of the mind of Christ; and His accomplishment is perfect, and His conquest is complete.

But in order to this, **there is a method of attainment.** That method Paul records in the Scriptures 2:12 to 3:21, beginning,

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure";

and ending,

"For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ;

"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself".

If one will study these phrases carefully he will find that Paul anticipated no victories through self; but, all victories through the Son of God. On the contrary it is as full of self-depreciation as it is of tribute to Divine grace. He affirms,

"It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure".

He charges,

"All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's".

He pleads,

"Rejoice in the Lord".

He declared,

*"Though I might also have confidence in the flesh * **

"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

"And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith".

He discredited the notion that he had already attained or was already made perfect but

"I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are

behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus".

No wonder he adds,

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

"(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ:

"Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

"For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (3:15-21).

This expression of joy rests, then, in grace. Salvation is of the grace of God and not by the merit of man.

Finally

THE GEMS OF JOY

His converts were his crown.

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

"I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

"And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (4:1-4).

Every successful soul-winner knows the meaning

of these two words "joy" and "crown". And yet, paradoxical as it sounds, it remains for every soul-winner to discover his own "joy"; to truly estimate his own "crown". That appreciation, that estimate, will be ours when those whom we have won to Christ are met in the upper world. It is written, *"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever"*. And again it is written, *"He that winneth souls is wise"*.

We have heard this morning from three of our city missionaries. While there is a social side to the service upon which they have reported, the great objective is soul-winning. The Tabernacle, the Eastside Mission, and the mission to the streets of the First Baptist—these all combine, with soul-winning as the supreme task in Christian service; and those who have so well represented them, while they know the joy of lending aid to the poor, of aiding the ignorant to become educated, of brightening the lives of boys and girls who are unfortunately situated, still the supreme "joy" of such service is not with the body, it is with the spirit instead.

It is reported that Dr. Barnardo was closing the rooms of his city mission in London one night when he noticed a ragged urchin, without hat, shoes or stockings, standing near the stove. He said to him, "Boy, it is time for you to go home." The boy paid no attention, and again he said, "Boy, why don't you go home?" To which the lad replied, "I ain't got none."

Dr. Barnardo could not believe it, but he took him home with him, sat him down to a good hot

meal, and talked with him until he was satisfied that the boy was telling the truth.

"Are there more like you?" the Dr. asked.

"Lots of 'em," said the lad.

"Will you show them to me?"

"Sure; I'll show 'em to you."

So at midnight that boy led Dr. Barnardo down London into a "close", and pointing into a coal-bin said, "Lots of 'em, in there!" The Dr. stooped down and striking a match, looked in; but it was empty. For a moment the Dr. thought the boy had not been telling him the truth, and to his further questions, the lad said, "The Cops have been after 'em; they are on the roof."

He showed the Dr. how to climb to the roof and there he saw thirteen of them sleeping under the stars, one little fellow hugged up tight by his elder brother that he might keep him warm. "Shall I wake 'em up?" inquired the boy. Dr. Barnardo was confounded! One boy on his hands and thirteen others thrust there if they wakened.

"No; not tonight," he said. But that scene set him on his quest for homeless boys. He found them, trained them, made men of thousands of them. But the best part of Dr. Barnardo's work was the fact that he pointed them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

Who can imagine his joy and crown when he went Home to Heaven to be greeted by hundreds of them who had preceded him into the land of Light? Paul's language is justified, "*My joy and crown*"! No wonder he besought Euodias and Syntyche to be reconciled to one another, and to join with other women in winning to Christ. No wonder he exclaimed, "I can do all things through

Christ which strengtheneth me". No wonder he believed, "*My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus*". No wonder he concluded, "*Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen*". Paul's was a glorious ministry in soul-winning. That being true, all else seems well.

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST, THE INCOMPARABLE

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

"But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

"And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name:

"That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:5-11).

CHRIST, THE INCOMPARABLE

Philippians 2:5-11.

THE phrase, Christ, the Incomparable, is extremely popular at present. It has come to be a custom with all liberal theologians, and almost a habit with outright infidels to pay tribute to the character of Jesus. Unitarians, and even atheists, have well-nigh exceeded evangelicals in their laudation of the Man from Nazareth; and the present-day higher critics all say "Amen", when we pay tribute to Him. Renan said, "In Jesus is condensed all that is good and exalted in all nature." Thomas Paine remarked, "The morality that He preached has not been exceeded by any." Disraeli, the Jew, confessed, "Jesus has conquered Europe and changed its name to Christendom." Rousseau remarked, "If the life and death of Socrates were those of a martyr, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God." When, therefore, a conservative talks either about the accomplishments or character of Jesus, he will find no liberal theologian, and but few infidels, to oppose him. It is only when we come to the question of His Deity, involving as it does, atonement for sin through sacrifice, cleansing by the shedding of Blood, that they revolt and reveal their real estimate of Christ's claims.

It is a marvelous thing that any man could so live and die as to compel even His enemies to pay tribute to Him; as to force from the lips of the most malignant opponents masterly encomiums, and yet Christ has accomplished that. When Paul

penned this Epistle to the Philippians this name was not so popular, and yet, by inspiration he proclaimed its coming power, and, for the moment, turned Prophet, and the civilized of all later centuries consent to the circumstance that he spake truthfully.

There are three things he says about this Incomparable One.

First of all, God gave to Him

AN INCOMPARABLE NAME

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

"But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

"And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:5-9).

Did you ever ask yourself the question why God gave to Him *"a Name which is above every name"*? In how many respects is that an incomparable Name? I shall not attempt to answer that in full, but a few suggestions:

He was incomparable in mental ability. Every apocryphal gospel tells remarkable things about the youth of Jesus. The true Gospels mention little of His youth, but when it is touched, His mental abilities are uncovered. At twelve years of age His parents at the feast, in leaving, missed Him. After they had gone a great way toward home they made the discovery that the Lad was not with them, and

went back, *"and it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers"*.

Again in the Word of God we are told that "He grew", not only "in stature", but "in wisdom", and that is easily accepted as a fact. The moment His public ministry begins men stand astounded, and even His enemies consent *"never man spake like this Man"*. On one occasion, when He had finished with the delivery of certain parables, He came into His own country, and taught them in their synagogue, *"insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this Man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's Son? is not His mother called Mary? and His brethren, James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this Man all these things"?*

He was a product of no school and yet His speech has given rise to the great schools of the centuries. He was the author of no code of laws, yet His declarations determine the righteousness of all law. He engaged in no philosophical speculations, yet all philosophers are compelled to sit at His feet. He formulated no distinct system of theology, yet the only theology worthy the attention of men, and calculated to do aught for a sinning, dying world, is that which is in the strictest keeping with His wonderful words. Truly, as Dr. Robert F. Horton, of the Old World, once said, "Churches and theologies—[he might have added, schools]

have failed us and confused us, but when Christ speaks from the mount, all is clear."

He was incomparable in mighty accomplishments. Dwight Hillis never said a truer thing, than when he wrote, "Our wonder grows apace when we remember that He wrote no book, no poem, no drama, no philosophy; invented no tool or instrument; fashioned no law or institution; discovered no medicine or remedy; outlined no philosophy of mind or body; contributed nothing to geology or astronomy, but stood at the end of His brief career, doomed and deserted, solitary and silent, utterly helpless, fronting a shameless trial and a pitiless execution. In that hour none so poor as to do Him reverence. And yet could some magician have touched men's eyes they would have seen that no power in Heaven and no force on earth for majesty and productiveness could equal or match this crowned Sufferer whose name was to be 'Wonderful'.

"The ages have come and gone; let us hasten to confess that the carpenter's Son hath lifted the gates of empires off their hinges and turned the stream of the centuries out of their channels. His spirit hath leavened all literature; He hath made laws just, governments humane, manners gentle, even cold marble warm; He refined art by new and Divine themes, shaped those cathedrals called 'frozen prayers', led scientists to dedicate their books and discoveries to Him, and so glorified an instrument of torture that the very queen among beautiful women seeks to enhance her loveliness by hanging His cross about her neck, while new inventions and institutions seem but

letters in His storied speech. Today His birthday, alone, is celebrated by all the nations. All peoples and tribes claim Him. None hath arisen to dispute His throne. Plato divides honors with Aristotle; Bacon walks arm in arm with Newton; Napoleon does not monopolize the admiration of soldiers. In poetry, music and art, and practical life, universal supremacy is unknown. But Jesus Christ is so opulent in His gifts, so transcendent in His words and works, so unique in His life and death, that He receives universal honors. His Name eclipses other names as the noonday sun obliterates by very excess of light."

He was incomparable in essential character. In all the days of my life I have never fallen upon an attack of the character of Christ until recently. Rousseau admired it, Paine paid it tribute, Hume honored it, and even our own man, Ingersoll, declared, "For the Man Jesus, I have infinite respect." Even erratic minds denying the Deity of Christ and deriding the claims of the Church, never had the hardihood to decry His character. It remained for a modern, to attempt that defamation and exercise that blasphemy. The world for many centuries, so far as it has read the Scriptures at all, has been well-nigh a unit in its exalted judgment of Jesus. In fact, the picture given in the four Gospels is just exactly such as to confirm the basis for Dr. Carnegie Simpson's claim that no such character could ever have been conceived apart from its actual existence. He quotes J. S. Mills as having declared, "It is no use to say that Christ, as exhibited in the Gospels, is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable

has been superadded by the traditions of His followers." It is no use, because, as Mills adds, "Who among His disciples, or their proselytes" [he might have added, "Who among the poets and dramatists of all the world"] is capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus or of imagining such a life and character? The only way in the world to account for their work is to suppose that they spoke in utter veracity. They had a model and they copied it faithfully, and because the model was faultless, the reproduction, being faithful, was perfect, also."

This character of Jesus becomes the more resplendent when one remembers the day in which He was born and lived. As another says, "It was an hour when tyranny and crime had gone upon a carnival. It seemed as if despots had determined to leave on earth not one of the gifted children of song, or eloquence, or philosophy, or morals. Julius Cæsar, the writer and ruler, had been murdered. Cicero, the orator, had been assassinated. Herod, who ruled over Christ's city, murdered his two brothers, his wife, Marianne, slew the children of Bethlehem, and, dying, ordered his nobles to be executed, that mourning for the king might be widespread. Yet in such an era, when He saw a thousand wrongs to be achieved, Christ maintained His serenity, and reigned victorious over life's troubles." And one might add, He provided a solution for every sorrow and a salvation from every sin.

But the Apostle speaks in the next place of

A CONQUERING NAME

He gave

"Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth".

His triumph in Heaven is complete. Two schools of interpreters—yea, twenty—have attempted the Book of Revelation. But the two great schools are Præterists and Futurists. The first of these says that most of the things prophesied in the Book of the Revelation have passed already, and the second insists, "Not so; they are all yet to come." Neither is right! Some of them have transpired and others of them are yet to come to pass. Two thousand years ago John, on the Isle of Patmos, was vouchsafed a vision of the open Heaven. He saw Jesus in His glorified estate. From Him he received messages for the seven Churches in Asia; and then the Faithful and True Witness turned his attention to the *"things which must shortly come to pass"*, and among them He granted to him a vision of the war in Heaven. Michael is shown going forth to war with the dragon,

"and the dragon fought and his angels;

"And prevailed not: neither was their place found any more in Heaven.

"And the great dragon was cast down, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

"And I heard a great voice saying in Heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

"And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and

by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

"Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev. 12:7-12).

Where Christ is, this arch-fiend cannot reign; he cannot even remain.

He will accomplish the supremacy of the earth.
"At the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, AND THINGS IN EARTH". O, how that declaration from Paul's pen fits into the teaching of the Old Testament worthies. The Psalmist, catching a vision of the ages to come, wrote,

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

"They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust.

"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall render presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

"Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him.

"For He will deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper" (72:8-12).

Daniel, also, you remember, says,

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, One like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him.

"And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (7:13, 14).

This is that of which Paul wrote in I Corinthians 15:24, 25:

"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up

the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

"For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet".

All civilization moves to one end, whether it knows it or not; and all christianization has one object, whether it be thoroughly apprehended or not, and that is the conquest of Christ in this world, and the making of a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness. And it shall be done! I know the discouragements of the days intervening, and I know how the delays trouble even the dutiful. I know how apostates from the faith filch the place of genuine prophets, and yet I know, on the authority of God's Word, from prophecies which have already found a fulfilment, that we move directly to this conquering by the Christ! God shall bring it to pass. Some one has said, "The century plant takes a hundred years for root and trunk, but blossoms in a night. And nations also shall in a day be born into culture and character." And this same writer says, "And every knee shall bow to the Name that is above every name, and He whom God has lifted to the world's throne shall, in turn, lift the world to a place beside Him."

His victory over hell will be acknowledged. There are some people who seem to think that hell is to beat Heaven out; that the final victory is to be with the underworld. The text says not so; "*At the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and THINGS UNDER THE EARTH*". I believe Satan and his entire host perfectly understand that fact. To me that is the interpretation of the speech of the devils at the sight of Jesus. They trembled when He drew

nigh, begged Him not to torment them **"before the time"**, as if it were perfectly understood that there was a time fixed when every devil that had ever allied himself with the great Dragon, and become a permanent rebel against the Divine government, should cringe at the mention of His conquering Name, and perish at the touch of His conquering hand. We wonder, after all, if that is not the interpretation of Revelation 20:10, where Satan and his associates and all followers, find their fate in the pit, hurled thence by the mighty Son of God. His is a conquering Name! At its mention everything of earth is destined to bow; at its mention every saint and angel of Heaven will fall on the face; and at its mention every devil in hell will fear and flee away; then *"every tongue"* shall *"confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"*.

His, then, is

A GOD-GLORIFYING NAME

It would be an interesting study indeed to run the Scriptures through and see in what respects the Name of Jesus glorifies God. O, there are so many! Let me pick out three of these and with that finish.

In that Name men are saved from sin. *"Thou shalt call His Name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins"*. There is an eighth wonder in the world today, namely, the denial of sin. The denial of the most evident, the most potent fact of human experience and sane observation—**SIN!** It is the author of all sorrows; it is the occasion of all doom; it is the call for hell. The whole world

is under its blight. Not one noble man has escaped; not one fair woman has gone unscathed. Discouragement, disease, despair and death lie over the earth like a pall.

The Name that is an antidote for sin, the man that can withdraw its sting, is the Name, the Man, that brings to God the greatest glory. In the Orient one of the commonest effects of sin is blindness. Consequently when the disciples of Jesus saw one totally stricken by this affliction they addressed their Master, "*Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?*" Jesus answered, "*Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents*". The effect upon him is more remote, it has come down a greater distance, "*but that the works of God should be made manifest in him*". And Christ healed him, and God was glorified.

The blind are everywhere, the lame lie at many gates, the fevered are found under a multitude of roofs, the deaf, the dumb, the demonized. O, how sin has made havoc with the sons of men. Dwight Hillis spake truly when he said, "Long ago Cleopatra, the daughter of supreme beauty, received sin into her arms, counting it to be an angel of light; but alas, sin broke her heart, and soon she welcomed the viper to her bosom. It was sin that wrecked the palace of David. It was sin that ruined the genius of Solomon. It was sin that stole the purple from Alcibiades and gave him instead the robe of a slave. It was sin that, serpent like, crawled over the threshold of the palaces in Rome and left its slime within court and banqueting hall. Sin was the flame which blackened the Doge's palace in Venice. Sin was the earthquake that toppled

down the treasure houses of Florence. For Bacon sin was a worm in the bud of his heart. For Byron sin was moth and rust that consumed the mind. For Shelley, sin was a Vandal that grew by the rapine and murder of the poet's soul."

We are told that when the work of excavation was done in the streets, and the houses of Pompeii were uncovered, and the gathered treasures in bronze and marble and ivories and mosaics were assembled in a museum, not one single object of them all had escaped some form of injury. The Winged Mercury had arms and legs broken, the white forehead of Venus had a black stain, every precious tablet was cracked to a greater or less degree, while the very rolls found in Pliny's tomb had their writings too faded to read. This is only a type of the havoc sin has made in men. The chief products of the Divine Artist, broken, scarred, stained, are we all. And Christ came to replace, to heal, to cleanse, to save. No wonder the men who looked upon Him in the old day when He both recovered the sick and forgave the sinner, glorified God, saying, "*We never saw it on this fashion*". O, His is a God-glorifying Name!

He glorifies God by transforming the saved. His work is not that of reformation only; it involves transformation.

"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren".

"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:18).

Henry Drummond in his matchless booklet, "The Greatest Thing in the World", speaks won-

derfully of this transformation, accomplished while we behold the face of the transfigured Christ, and looking on Him, grow like Him in character. Horace Stanton says, "In the gallery of the Vatican at Rome, said to contain of art more genuine treasures than any other on the earth, there hangs a work which stands not only supreme above those others there; but, by the consenting judgment of three centuries and a half, at the head of all the oil paintings in the world—the Transfiguration by Raphael. It was in the noonday of his life that he began it, and the sublimest conceptions of that peerless spirit are here displayed. A genius of amazing brilliancy, in imagination never yet surpassed, but tender, sensitive, and reverential, was portraying that single scene when the Saviour was manifested to the disciples in His future celestial light, the only time that earthly eyes had yet seen Him in His glory. And, as the artist bent his might upon it, the splendid vision rose, in drawing, grouping, and dramatic power, a work unequalled. It is called the grandest picture ever limner wrought. But, as the last lines were almost done, God called Raphael. And, over his shadowy bier, they hung this picture; its colors still wet upon the canvas, the last work of that lifeless hand. What a funeral was this—that graceful figure covered with the painter's cloak, the throng of mourners kneeling weeping there; but over all, the breathing beauty and immortal radiance of that Heavenly scene, which showed the luster of the Transfigured Christ."

As Raphael in art, so we in spirit, speech and life, may delineate the transfiguration of our Lord.

And, at our death, the luster of Christ—crowned and regnant—shall fall on us, to give each his proper splendor. For, “as there is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, though many stars may draw their radiance from that one central sun; so Christ’s glory shall be chiefest, and each of us will have a proper share, all unlike one another, though we all shall be like Him”.

Yet once more, **God receives glory in that Christ is Lord over death and the grave.** He is our hope of a resurrection. When Lazarus lay dead and was revived—the great New Testament type of the resurrection of the saints—Jesus said to Martha,

“Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?”

*“Then they took away the stone. * * And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me.*

“And I knew that Thou hearest Me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

“And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth”,

and the glory of God was revealed.

Ah, men, He is the Lord of life out of death; of victory over the grave. In His Name saints shall conquer against the last enemy, and troop up in bodies incorruptible, powerful, glorious, spiritual. I have attempted at times, in speaking of the resurrection, to tell my auditors something of what the resurrection body will be. It was an impossible proposition! The most physically perfect Man the world ever saw was Jesus on the day of the crucifixion—in His prime at thirty-three years of age, uncorrupted by sin, untouched by

any infirmity of body, soul or spirit; and in that body, risen from the dead, one finds the model in the likeness of which all saints shall come forth.

Stanton tells us that "in the museums of Europe, you see statues of Antinous, that young man of antiquity who was noted for his symmetry and grace. There is the Apollo Belvidere, an artist's sublime conception of the Godlike form. In Frankfort you visit Dannecker's famous group of statuary, 'Ariadne on the Panther'. It is in a building especially erected for it. There is the lithe and agile beast. Upon his back the beauteous maiden sits. The drapery half reveals, and half conceals her fine proportions. The expression on her face is most sweet. The crimson curtains, which surround the alcove, mellow the light, so that she almost seems to live. The group is mounted on a revolving pedestal. And, as it turns, you survey it from every side—matchless in its perfect beauty. The Antinous shows the ideal mould of man; the Ariadne the ideal form of woman. But who shall prove that, in the coming world, yea in the Millennium of this world, every man and every woman will not be as beautiful of face and figure as the Antinous and the Ariadne? Those Greek statues were largely representations of the living figures seen in the gymnasia. They were illustrations of the superb physiques of the actual persons of that day. Modern statues are largely copied from them. But surely the figures of the glorified children of God in the New Jerusalem, will be as beautiful as were those of the children of men in ancient Greece".

"This is the first resurrection.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years".

It is a glorious prospect, and God Himself, is glorified in the sure promise of Christ's victory over death and the grave, and He will be in its final and unspeakable realization.

CHAPTER III.

A PASTOR'S APPEAL

PHILIPPIANS 2:12-16.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good-pleasure.

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

"Holding forth the Word of Life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain" (Phil. 2:12-16).

A PASTOR'S APPEAL

Philippians 2:12-16.

PAUL was a Pastor-Evangelist. With some of the Churches which he established he remained as long as three years; with others, a brief time. But he retained a pastoral oversight over them all, and his Letters to them are not so much the appeals of an evangelist as the counsels and appeals of a pastor. His was the Pastor's heart! That is strongly evident in the text of this morning.

Permit a threefold suggestion in exposition of these words: The Obedient Life, The Unblemished Life, and The Brilliant Life.

THE OBEDIENT LIFE

As I understand the Apostle he makes, in verses 12 and 13, an appeal for obedience independent of human leadership; an obedience inspired by the Holy Spirit; an obedience directed by the Divine pleasure.

The Apostle's appeal for an obedience independent of human leadership.

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure".

The presence of the great Apostle with the people of Philippi can better be imagined than described. It is a fact of human history that the majority of men are, in no small measure, what some giant has made them. Paul, in spite of his pigmy frame, was a Colossus in the Church, a

commander indeed. Obedient conduct on the part of the army of the Lord was more easy and more certain when he appeared as a Captain in its midst. The Apostle was desirous, however, that obedience should be equally effective in his absence. His endeavor was to get them to look past him to their greater Captain and Leader, even Christ! It was his endeavor, to get them to realize that while he might be regarded by them as a leader in the Church he was not the leader of the Church. That office was reserved to the Son of God, who was at once their Saviour and the Head of the Church. Truly, we are not to lean to our "own understanding", nor yet, upon the arm of another, who is as mortal as ourselves; but, rather, are we to look directly to Him, who, by a perfect obedience to the Father's will, is at once our example and our sufficient strength.

Our obedience is to be inspired by His indwelling Spirit. Hence the injunction of the Apostle:

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure".

There are many people who approach Christianity from the standpoint of duty; and who seem to feel that its regnant word is "Do." No; Christianity is not a command, but rather, an inspiration! The man who does, that he may be redeemed, has missed the mark; but where the Spirit of God is within, one walks in the way. William George Jordan says: "Duty is forced like a pump: love is spontaneous like a fountain; duty is prescribed and formal; it is part of the red tape of life.

It is good enough as a beginning; it is poor as a finality."

Paul takes the same position. Read his thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the greatest disquisition on love extant. He declares that a man may do his entire duty, and even exceed it. He may offer his body to be burned, and yet prove himself an unprofitable servant, if he lacks that compulsive spirit of love. The truth is that apart from that spirit we cannot please God. Our endeavors are as filthy rags. Every virtue possessed, every victory won, every thought of holiness are His alone. This same Apostle later wrote, of himself,

"By the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me".

There is a difference about a labor inspired by the indwelling Spirit of God and one resulting from mere human strength. A man who can come into the atmosphere of the former always recognizes its superior altitude; there is another and better aroma about it all. It is said that there is a church in Alaska built by the Indians, that perpetually exhales a fragrance, as if the finest incense were being burned within its walls. The odor comes from the wood of the giant arbor vine, of which the church is built, and this aroma will last as long as the edifice stands. So those works, indicted by the Spirit of God, are in fragrant obedience, and the world without inhales the sweet breath and is brought to believe in the God whose Spirit indwells believers!

Then, according to the Apostle, this obedience is to be directed by the Divine pleasure.

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure".

The true child consults the father's will; and the genuine Christian longs to know God's pleasure. The great men of the earth, reckoned from a religious standpoint, have become such by obedience to the Divine will, rather than from any or all other circumstances combined. We have not forgotten the report made of Mr. Moody, that having heard one wonder what the Lord could do with a man who was absolutely surrendered to Him, responded, "I will be that man."

A writer tells of being at a camp meeting and hearing a tall, spare man preach on the text, *"I was not disobedient unto the Heavenly vision"*.

It was a remarkable characterization of Paul the Apostle, with especial emphasis on the obedience which seemed to be the dominant trait in his life. The preacher was in a large sense an embodiment of his theme. Long years before he had heard a voice calling him to the dark regions of the world, and he went alone and single-handed, preaching the Gospel to the Kaffirs and other heathen peoples. It is said that he won over seven thousand persons to the Cross of Christ. One word seemed to sum up the teaching he wished to put into the hearts of his great congregation. He would rise to his full height, over six feet, and cry in a strange, shrill voice, "Obedience! Obedience! Obedience!" till it stormed the hearts of the hearers. Although that great man passed on some years since, that sharp voice rings again down

through the years "Obedience! Obedience! Obedience!" It was the substance of the Gospel that old man preached; it is still the heart of any gospel that is worth preaching.

Oft these words of Bishop William Taylor—for it was he—sounded into the ears, and at times when the message was most needed. And the spirit that made mighty, Moody—the evangelist, and William Taylor—the marvelous missionary, is the very same that has accounted for every mighty evangelist the centuries have known, and every missionary who has carried light into darkened lands; and for that matter, it is the spirit that can help the humblest to become valiant servants for the Most High.

But this Pastor-Evangelist passes from the Obedient Life to

THE UNBLEMISHED LIFE

It instantly occurs to one that there is the closest possible relation between the obedient life and the unblemished life. But there are some suggestions in the Apostle's words here which too seldom occur to us.

The first is: **The unblemished life is characterized by no needless controversy.**

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke".

The impression sometimes prevails that the problem of life is to keep one's self unspotted from the world. Perhaps a greater problem still is to keep one's self from spotting others. If we had to take our choice between the scandalized and the scan-

dalizer, we would unhesitatingly accept the position of the former as against that of the latter! Defilement is not always from without! James, in his Epistle, says:

"Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

"Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

"Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth.

"And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:3-6).

That is a somewhat serious indictment! Truly, the unspotted man, and the unblemished man, is the man whose tongue is tempered by the indwelling Spirit of God; and his mouth, one which is no longer full of deadly poison, but is one from which there cometh forth blessing and not cursing.

It is said that Phillips Brooks was one day visiting in a family and picked up the little girl, of whom he was very fond, and she told him of some childish grievance and concluded her story with the words, "It made me real cross." "Cross, cross," the Bishop exclaimed, "I shouldn't suppose you ever got cross." "Wouldn't you be cross," replied the child, "if anybody treated you so?" "I don't know whether I would or not," said the Bishop. "Perhaps I would, if it would do me any good." "Did it make you feel any better?" "No," the little one answered hesitatingly. "Then," said the Bishop, "I don't see any reason for being cross."

"Murmurings and disputings" have not added a vast deal to the world's progress, and still less

to its happiness. The simple truth is that that mastery which seals the lips, even when there is pain and rage in the soul, is the mastery akin to that which Christ evinced all through life.

There are some people who think that if they are struck, they must cry out. Christ did not. It may not be an absolute necessity that we should so do. It is told to her eternal credit that Disraeli's wife, going with him on that great day when he was to face his antagonist, Gladstone, in a debate that would determine the action of the English Parliament, and in no small measure Disraeli's future standing, sat in the gallery, and with calm face beamed upon him from the moment he opened his lips until he had finished the last word; when the fact was, that as she alighted from the carriage, the bungling servant closed its door upon her finger and crushed it. Without a word, she whipped her handkerchief out and bound it about the finger and walked at the side of the great Beaconsfield into the House of Parliament, took her place in the gallery, never having reported the accident lest it might distract him from his speech. "*Charity suffereth long, and is kind*". The "blameless life" is not a "murmuring" life, nor a life devoted to "vain disputations".

The blameless life reveals a conduct indicative of the child of God. Hence the Apostle's words:

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke".

Here again, however, let no man make a mistake! Paul was not one of those soft souls, who yielded his ground for the sake of undesirable peace;

and certainly he was not one of those garrulous souls who could talk eloquently, but could not walk in accord with his own counsel. We know from his Epistle to the Romans that he believed the life in Christ to be fittingly expressed by one's walk before God, hence the significance of baptism to him:

"Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life".

A little later, in the same Epistle, he writes again:

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit".

Eloquence is a good thing; but the world has always been in need, and is now, of feet that are more eloquent than tongues: and of a walk more Godly than talk. I have read somewhere the Chinese legend which tells of the three great religious teachers of the celestial empire holding a sorrowful conference in their heavenly abode, looking with profound regret upon the degeneracy of their people, and mourning that their life work seemed so entirely a failure. At last they determined to return to earth in order to find some suitable missionary whom they could send forth as a reformer. They came in their wanderings to an old man sitting as a guardian to a fountain. He talked to them so wisely and so earnestly of the great concerns which they had at heart that they concluded unanimously that he was the very man for whom they were seeking. But when they proposed the mission to him he replied: "Only the upper portion of

my body is of flesh and blood; the lower portion is of stone. I can talk about virtue and good works, but I cannot rise from my seat to perform any righteous acts." That man sitting there by the fountain with clear head, but with stone legs, should be a warning to all Christians. Such people are to be found in life as well as legend. In the Scriptures that knowledge which is acceptable to God is ever linked with true service."

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (Col. 2:6).

"This is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it" (II John 1:6).

This unblemished life is to be lived in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. There are many people who are making excuse for not becoming Christians, namely, they are so surrounded and associated that Christianity is not possible. Poor excuse! God never promised any child of His to put him down in easy circumstances. So long as Satan dwells in the world it must be the fate of every believer to dwell in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Monasticism is not Christianity; in truth, it is very doubtful if it is even morality.

We have a chapter in our volume "**The Evolution of the Kingdom**", on the "Signs of the Times." Some people, who have no sympathy with the Biblical subject, want to dilate upon "the Spirit of the Times," and even ministers are sometimes telling their brethren that they must keep pace with it. The Scriptures instruct after another manner. The true Christian must for ever be out of harmony with the spirit of the times. As A. C.

Dixon once said, "Vox populi" is often "Vox diaboli." The man who walks with God must make up his mind even to submit to the jeers of the thoughtless crowd; be pained by its profanity, shocked by its sins, yet never be turned aside from the Christian course by its suggestions. That is indeed the unblemished life.

With his usual logic, the Apostle passes from the Obedient Life to the Unblemished Life, and from the Unblemished Life to

THE BRILLIANT LIFE

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

"Holding forth the Word of Life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain".

The darkened world depends upon the Christian life for light. That is a fine tribute that was paid John the Baptist: *"He was a burning and a shining light"*. He will for ever then, stand out as an example to believers who should be reminded of their appointment as *"lights in the world"*; who would give literal obedience to the injunction spoken of God by Isaiah's lips, to the Israel of the Old Testament, and for that matter, to the Israel of the New:

"Arise, shine; for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,

"For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.

"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Is. 60:1-3).

I clipped from my scrap-book a little poem which

makes its own appeal to the individual, and ought to make an effective one:

"Don't waste your time in longing,
For bright impossible things.
Don't sit supinely yearning,
For the swiftness of angel wings.
Don't spurn to be a rush-light,
Because you are not a star.
But brighten some bit of darkness,
By shining just where you are.

"There is need of the tiniest candle,
As well as the garish sun;
The humblest deed is ennobled,
When it is worthily done;
You may never be called to brighten
The darkened regions afar;
So, by day, your mission,
By shining just where you are.

"Just where you are my brother,
Just where God bids you stand;
Though down in the deepest shadow,
Instead of the sunlit land;
You may carry a brightness with you,
That no gloom or darkness can mar;
For the light of the Christ-like spirit
Will be shining wherever you are."

Such a life can look to the Word alone for its light. Hence Paul's words: "*Holding forth the Word of Life*". The longer I live the more profoundly am I impressed with that great fact. One morning, years since, in our ministers' meeting, we had Dr. F——, then of Andover, give a brief and brilliant address, the logic of which was as lame as the language was chaste. He told us the church of the present day was a discredited institution, and that its dying condition was in part due to its ancient theology; and he told us, eloquently enough, to adopt the modern view and march on.

Andover did that with a vengeance, and she perished in her folly of having departed from "*the faith which was once delivered*". Finally she presented to the world the pitiful sight of an institution splendidly equipped with buildings, endowed with a million dollars, her every chair filled with a notable theologian, and her student halls and class rooms deserted. She debated awhile between a necessary burial and affiliation with Harvard University; and finally concluded that by the help of this notable school she might longer maintain her existence. And yet, the very man who saw the new theology sink that ship of learning, and knows its paralysis in the pulpit he occupies, is so slow to learn, that he still pleads with his brethren to depart from the faith once for all delivered and flounder with him and his fellows in a quag-mire of unbelief.

Finally, "*Holding forth the Word of Life*". In that fact, and in that alone, has any man occasion to rejoice; any pastor to conclude that he has "*not run in vain, neither laboured in vain*".

The longer one lives, the more widely one is permitted to observe, the more fully is he persuaded that the hope of the future is in "*the faith which was once delivered*" and the obligation of every church is one and the same, namely, that she hold forth the "Word of Life" and find in the souls of men the faith of the Gospel of the Son of God.

"I stood and watched my ships go out,
Each one by one unmooring free,
And the time the quiet harbor filled
With the flood tide from the sea.

"The first that sailed, her name was Joy,
She spread a smooth white ample sail,

And eastward drove, with bending spars,
Before the singing gale.

"The next that sailed, her name was Hope,
No cargo in her hold she bore,
Thinking to find in western lands,
Of merchandise a store.

"The next that sailed, her name was Love,
She showed a red flag at the mast,
A flag as red as blood she showed,
And toward the south sped fast.

"The last that sailed, her name was Faith,
Slowly she took her passage forth,
Tacked, and lay to; at last she steered,
A straight course for the north.

"My gallant ships, they sailed away,
Over the shimmering summer sea,
I stood at watch for many a day,
But only one came back to me.

"For Joy was caught by Pirate Pain,
Hope ran upon a hidden reef,
And Love took fire and foundered fast
In whelming seas of grief.

"Faith came at last, storm-beat and torn,
But recompensed me all my loss,
For as a cargo safe she brought
A crown linked to a cross."

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOST ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death" (Phil. 3:10).

THE MOST ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

Philippians 3:10.

I HAVE spoken to you touching a part of this text, namely, "*the power of His resurrection*". But, since that time, the whole verse has been in the process of illumination for me, and the truths, which it so evidently contains, have been becoming more and more precious to me, until I must speak to this text, "*that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death*".

As Phillips Brooks has said, "It is one thing to know a fact and another to know the power of that fact. It is one thing to stand on shore and see the great waves and say there is a storm, and it is a very different thing to be out in its waves, tossed every way by them, fighting for your life. On the shore, you know **of** them. In their midst, you **know** them. You know their power. The first is information! The second is experience!"

Some men are content with knowing facts. Other people will be content only with knowing powers. An unfelt fact is nothing at all to these last. There is no truth, to them, that does not take their nature and their lives into its hands and change them. Of this last class was Paul, who prayed that he might know the power of Christ's resurrection. And Paul also prayed that he might know "*the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death*".

It is a prayer that not many people make. Some might join in his petition to know Christ, and they

might also desire to know the power of His resurrection, but, oh, how few pray to enter into "*the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death*"!

And yet we doubt if any man will ever know Christ as He is; ever know Christ as one might know Him. We doubt if one will ever understand the power of His resurrection, unless he also willingly enters into the fellowship of His sufferings. This morning, then, I want to set the points of this petition in order before you.

The first thing for which Paul prayed was to know

JESUS, THE PERSON

I think the Apostle wanted to **know Him as a Friend.**

Did it ever occur to you that one must see in Jesus, a Friend, as the very first step to any better knowledge of Him? When we make an acquaintance in this world, we do not attempt to win his love at first. We seek to inspire friendship instead! That must have been a great day with Christ's disciples when He delivered to them the wonderful discourse in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of John. When were students ever privileged such a teacher and such teaching as they were privileged that day? Their enthusiasm must have risen to its climax when Christ said to them, "*Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you*" (John 15:15).

When a man takes the deepest secrets of his heart and bares them before your eyes, it gives

one of the best proofs possible of his friendship for you, and, when on this day Jesus let His disciples know some things that He had never spoken to mortal man before, namely, the coming of His death, the circumstances attending it; and, at the same time, gave them promise of the Holy Spirit, and whispered into their ears what He would expect of them as His followers, it proved beyond doubt that He regarded them as His friends, and that He gave His friendship to them.

I confess to you that I long to know Jesus as a Friend; to know Him sufficiently to sit with Him in the Heavenly places; to feel in Him that confidence that I know toward a few of the choicest of men, namely, the confidence of heart-exposure, the laying bare before His eyes of every secret of life; and then to have the sweet experience of having Him tell me His secrets as well, of having Him initiate me into the mysteries of His life, and of hearing Him say in so many words, "I love you".

"In the secret of His presence,
How my soul delights to hide!
Oh, how precious are the lessons
Which I learn at Jesus' side!
Earthly cares can never vex me,
Neither trials lay me low;
For when Satan comes to tempt me,
To the secret place I go.

"When my soul is faint and thirsty,
'Neath the shadow of His wing
There is cool and pleasant shelter,
And a fresh and crystal spring;
And my Saviour rests beside me,
As we hold communion sweet;
If I tried, I could not utter
What He says when thus we meet."

A while ago a dear friend of many years was

visiting me, a man in whose integrity of character I had perfect trust, and one day as we knelt to pray together over a matter of common interest, when we reached the "Amen" and rose from our knees, each with tears in his eyes, he put his arms kindly about me and said, "I love you." Oh, to know Christ in that way. It was Paul's prayer. It ought to be your longing and mine.

I sometimes wonder how Catholic Christians get any comfort or inspiration whatever out of bowing before images painted on canvas, or carved in marble. I cannot forget Edith Mary Norris's poem, "The Stone Christ", in which she paints her picture by these words:

"She drew her rags more closely,
As she passed through the biting sleet;
And the stones on the pave were icy
To her bare and bleeding feet;
But none of the passers noted
Her anguish, or turned with scorn,
And she passed through the open portals
Of the house of God, forlorn.
For she thought in cloistered precincts,
The sacred haunt of prayer,
To lose for a while her burden
Of sorrow and want and care.
Above, from the niche in the pillared aisle,
A stone Christ looked with a pitiless smile.

"She thought of her lover and husband,
The swart bread-winner, slain
While earning the pittance doled him
For a toil that was almost pain;
Great-hearted he was, and tender,
And over her soul in a wave
Broke the waves of deep affliction,
As she thought of his pauper's grave,
And thought of his little children
In a garret crying for bread,
While down on the pavement splashing,
Fell the heart-wrung tears she shed.

Above, from the niche in the pillared aisle,
A stone Christ looked with a pitiless smile.

“O Christ, who was born of woman,
Give ear to a mother's prayer,
Who asks of Thee bread for her children;
Dear God, in Thy mercy spare
From the pangs of cold and hunger
My darlings, whose hair of gold
Makes tangled thickets of sunshine
In my attic bare and cold;
Whose smiles, as I break and give them
The hard and mouldy crust,
Tear my breaking heart with anguish;
Dear God, dost Thou hear? Thou must!’
Above, from a niche in a pillared aisle,
A stone Christ looked with a pitiless smile.

“They came on the morrow thronging,
And they filled the holy place
With the pomp of wealth and fashion,
Proud priests in linen and lace,
With singers following after,
Passed stately up the aisle,
While the mellow organ thundered
Triumphant strains the while;
And the air was rich with incense,
From golden censers flung;
And a song like that of the angels
The white-robed singers sung!
Above, from a niche in a pillared aisle,
A stone Christ looked with a pitiless smile.

“They sang with a silken rustle,
On their knees, ‘Thy will be done;
Come Thy Kingdom on earth as in Heaven’,
They prayed in unison.
Then, when the prayers were ended,
The preacher took the word;
They settled themselves to listen,
But never the sense they heard.
He spoke in cultured accents
Of love and charity:
‘Who doeth it unto the least of these,
Lo, he doeth it unto Me!’
Above, from a niche in a pillared aisle,
A stone Christ looked with a pitiless smile.

"They found on that Sunday morning,
In the wretched garret bed,
A mother and little children,
Lying cold and stark and dead.
Lo, her prayer had been heard and answered,
She had entered into her rest,
The poor heart-broken mother
With the wee gold hearts on her breast.
They brought them into the chancel,
And chanted a requiem song,
Too, late, O Christian brethren!
They will stand and accuse ere long.
And still, from a niche in the pillared aisle,
The stone Christ looked with a pitiless smile."

Any system that shuts up the Word of God against the study of the people takes away the true Christ presented in its revelations, the Christ whose heart-beats are felt in its sentences, and gives to them only a stone Christ, instead.

Oh, how grateful we ought to be this morning because the Bible has been open before us. Some of us have found in Christ a Friend, whose life touches our lives, whose words have been to us true wisdom and whose heartbeats we have felt as we have listened to Him speak to us through the Scriptures in expressions of love. It was through Paul's study of the Word that he expected to know Christ as his Friend.

I think Paul wanted to know Him also as **His Saviour**. Sin had played havoc with Saul's life. At the very time when he supposed himself to be approved of God, he was engaged in a course which he eventually came to see to have been most criminal so that he was compelled to speak of himself as "the chief of sinners". One day he was writing to the Church at Rome, and, when he had reached the seventh chapter of his Epistle, he uncovered his

past and told them how sin had wrought in him all manner of concupiscence; how sin had deceived him and even slew him, and he concluded by saying, *"I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members"*. And then he cried, *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death"?*

A moment's silence and then he answers, *"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord"*. He was coming to know Christ as a Saviour from his sin, and that is how he wants to know Him. That is how you and I need to know Him.

A while ago a young woman in Chicago had fallen into sin and was living in a place of shame. One of the workers in the Moody Institute, a beautiful Christian man, hearing through friends of her whereabouts, went after her, and, by process of law, brought her away from the place. He led her to Christ. He put her into the Moody School as a student, and later he took her unto himself as his own wife. And I have often thought that that is just what Jesus does for those who really come to know Him. He delivers us out of our evil association. His love toward us woos us from our bad habits, and, in order to utterly remove our reproach and redeem us from our shame, He weds us unto Himself; and then, like the beloved Husband He is, He shares His own honors with us, and, better than all, He uses His strength against the enemy, and by a constant deliverance, He enables us to stand.

Oh, I want to know Him as Saviour! There are so many sins that I cannot overcome myself, but when I shall know Him as I ought, His intimate

presence and His instant help will be the end of them. That is what Paul meant when he said, that I may *"be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith"*.

Then I think the Apostle wanted to **know Him as Sanctifier**.

I know there are a great many people in the church who are afraid of that term; but Paul did not belong to that class. In almost every one of his Epistles you will find him employing the term, and, in that wonderful Letter to the Hebrews, he says (*Chap. 2:11*) of Christ, *"Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren"*.

Dr. A. B. Simpson has a little tract on "Himself" that I wish every Christian might read. In that tract he says, "I prayed a long time to get sanctified, and sometimes I thought I had it. On one occasion I felt I had something, and I held on with a desperate grip for fear I should lose it, and of course I did. I lost it because I did not hold onto **Him**. I had been taking a little water from the reservoir, when I might, all the time, have received from Him the fullness of the Fountain itself. I went to meetings and heard people speak of joy, and I even thought I had the joy, but I did not keep it because I had not Himself as my joy. At last He said to me, oh, so tenderly, 'My child, just take **Me** and let **Me** be in you the constant supply of all this, Myself.' And when at last I got my eyes off my sanctification and just placed them on the Christ in me, I found I had my sanctification in

Him, and oh, it was such rest. It was all right and right forever."

It must be so to those who know Christ if "*He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one*".

The next thing for which Paul prayed was to know

THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

Since we have given an entire sermon to this sentence, I may be pardoned for passing it over to-day, with but brief discussion. It is evident to me the Apostle longs to know the power of Christ's resurrection in two respects.

First, in that regeneration which means death to sin and a new life in Christ.

To him, baptism was a perfect figure of this first. In writing to the Romans he said,

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?"

"Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection".

Ernest Gordon, in the life of his renowned father, tells the story of the conversion at the Clarendon Street Church of an Irishman by the name of Patrick Daley. Being saved himself, Patrick went after a friend of his, Peter Murphy, who lived in the upper story of the same tenement, and he got this drinking Irishman to sign a Total Abstinence pledge, and then he told him that he must have Jesus to help him keep it. They prayed together

and Murphy was saved. Things went on well all the week, but when Sunday morning came around, Joe Healey came over to pay Peter his usual visit, and Murphy, in speaking of it, said, "This was the worst yet, for Healey used to come to see Murphy as regular as Sunday, always bringing a bottle of whiskey with him, and the two would spree it all day until they turned the whole house into a bedlam.

"So," said Daley, "when I went to the door to let him in, he said, 'Good morning, Pat, is Murphy in?' I said, 'No, Murphy is out! He does not live here any longer!' 'Now, Dr. Gordon," he said, "did I tell a lie? What I meant was that the old Murphy did not live there any more, for you know Mr. Moody told us that when a man is converted, he is a new creature, and that is what I meant. Did I tell a lie?"

If one will turn to II Corinthians 5:17 he will be compelled to admit that Patrick Daley told the truth, for Paul said, "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*".

If Paul's teaching "*Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*", is true, the Murphy that Joe Healey knew was dead, and a new man in Christ Jesus dwelt in that upper tenement, through the power of Christ's resurrection.

Then the Apostle Paul wanted to know **the power of Christ's resurrection as exercised against the grave!** He says, "*If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead*".

It is in that power that we have the promise of redemption for our bodies. I believe with a re-

cent writer that "those who have not watched the trend of opinion on that point have little idea of the extent to which, even in Orthodox ranks, the Swedenborgian notion of elimination has supplanted the primitive doctrine of resurrection. Instead of holding that at the sound of the last trump God will quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us, it is becoming very common to maintain that at death a spiritual, incorporeal substance is released from the body; thus one's death is his resurrection, since in that event an imprisoned spiritual body breaks its shell and comes forth like the butterfly from the chrysalis. If that were true, it would not be the angel's trump calling the dead from the grave that ushers in the resurrection, but the sexton's bell tolling the dead to the grave."

Paul did not believe that. Read the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians, or the fourth chapter of I Thessalonians, and find that the Apostle Paul believes in that power of resurrection which would bring back to us the bodies of our loved ones, changed only in the elimination of corruption, dishonor, weakness, and nature, and the implantation of incorruption, glory, power and spirit.

I went one week to Lakewood with a family who laid away a beautiful daughter. She had seen but twelve summers, and I confess to you, as I looked upon their tearstained faces, and realized the agony they had known in having this girl snatched from health to the grave by three days of indescribable suffering, I should have been silent before them, and compelled, if I spake at all, to speak as one who was without hope, could I not

have told them that one day the graves would give up their dead and the house broken here by the claims of the cemetery would be perfected there by Christ's resurrection power.

The third thing for which Paul prayed was to know

THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS

There are two or three respects in which the Apostle might enter into that fellowship.

In the lowliness of Christ's station. In his Epistle to the Philippians, Paul speaks of how Christ Jesus *"who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself"* (Phil. 2:6).

It was not a humility of station merely; it was that true humility of spirit that ever characterizes the unselfish. When He had His choice between sharing the Throne with God and the lowest estate with men, He was moved by the very spirit of love that was in Him to accept the latter. You cannot share the low estate of men without suffering. You cannot go down on a level with the social outcast and stand at his side, and pour your sympathy into his ear, and let him feel the pulse of an honest heart, without suffering. It will bring you social ostracism as it brought it to Christ; and, it will burden your heart, because it will take on the poor man's woes, and you will be compelled to groan in spirit, as Jesus groaned at the sight of suffering Mary and Martha.

Phillips Brooks was right when he said, "True humility on the part of a disciple is one in nature with Christ's own humility."

Here is a delicate woman who is impelled by His Spirit within her to go into the worst wards of a hospital and serve the lowest and most loathsome there! But when you ask her why she makes such a sacrifice, she answers with a smile, "Sacrifice? It is a sweet service." She has entered into the fellowship of His humiliation.

Years ago my friends, Mrs. Riley's University chum and her husband, young people just graduated, surrounded by a host of close relatives and admiring friends, picked up and set off into Western China, and there in a city of filth and squalor, and among an uncouth and unkempt people, put in their years and found pleasure in the ministry. They entered into the fellowship of Christ's humiliation. Paul wanted that same spirit to possess him, hence the prayer of our text. Can you pray it? Can I?

In the strength of His temptation. Did you ever think of what that wilderness temptation meant to Christ? Did you ever sit down to contemplate how, in a few sentences, Satan swept every key of human nature, to find if a one were out of tune with God? "*If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread*". Christ was hungry. The appeal to Christ was an appeal to employ His Divine power to satisfy Himself. And, oh, how strong that appeal must have been, because for forty days and nights He had not tasted food. There may be men in Minneapolis today who are hungry and who, like Jean Val Jean, are ready to

break the laws of the land that the appetite may be appeased. And yet to go hungry, when one can't do other righteously, is to come into fellowship with Christ's sufferings.

Again, the devil took Him up into the Holy City, and set Him upon a pinnacle of the Holy Temple, and said unto Him, "*Cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and in their hands they shall bear Thee up*".

Oh, what a temptation to come into prominence through an appeal to the eyes. And when you are tempted by gaudy dress, or sensational behaviour, to call attention to yourself, and get a reputation, just remember that to yield to it is to miss the fellowship of Christ's sufferings in that for years He walked among men unnoticed, and would have died without coming into prominence, rather than do it in any other way than in defense of the right. Jesus longed to have the popular ear. Jesus took pleasure in seeing the multitudes assemble about Him, for such was His mission of mercy to them that it must have been so, but never once did He descend to any clap-trap suggestions of Satan, to accomplish that prominence and its consequent power. And then see how Satan again "*sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*", and says, "*All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me*". Jesus longed to have these kingdoms. Jesus had been promised these kingdoms. Here was a plan by which He could come into possession of them without suffering on His part, without the exercise of patience, through thousands of years of waiting; and the price to be paid for that coveted privilege

was only a single bending of the knee! Sometime when you see a chance to make a few hundred dollars by a dishonest word, by a deceiving look, by silence even, and yet you know that to come into possession of it would please Satan, and, in fact, would be for the moment a prostration of yourself at his feet, just remember that Christ has gone before you there, and when the worlds were offered Him for a single yielding; when all the kingdoms and the glory of them might have been His, by setting conscience aside for one moment, He turned from those possessions to the direst poverty possible, and answered, "*Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve*"; and you will spurn the tempting profit and go your way clean-conscienced, having entered into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings.

In the extent of His sacrifice! The Apostle Paul saw that Christ had laid down everything for him, and so he says, I want to lay down everything for Christ. The things that were gain to me I want to count as sacrifice for Him. The world has never realized as yet what Christ's offering of Himself meant. We have never dreamed the crucible in which Christ lived out His days! When He was an innocent babe, Herod, animated by Satan, attempted His slaughter. Doubtless His appearance at 12 years of age excited antipathy in the hearts of some of the scribes and Pharisees from which they never recovered. From the day that His public ministry began until the day that He died on the Cross, every indignity, every suffering that Church and State could heap upon Him, He had to

endure. Holman Hunt has painted a picture entitled "The Shadow of Death". It represents Christ in His carpenter shop. At the close of the day He rises from His task and wearily stretches Himself, and, as He stands there with His arms uplifted, His mother, who has come into the shop for some utensil, lifts her eyes a moment, and, lo, the setting sun strikes His form in such a way that the shadow He casts on the shop wall is a perfect cross. Instantly she is filled with a strange fear, lest it portend His coming agony. Hunt's conception is in wonderful keeping with the whole teaching of the Word of God. There was never an hour, after Christ began His public ministry, in which it was not possible to see that the Cross was His destiny. He could not compromise the truth and consequently the church which had departed from it would not accept His words. He could not praise the existing civilization; consequently the state, seeing that His teaching would overturn the very foundations and expose its sinfulness, set its officers on His track. He never spake but He was misunderstood, because men were so sunken in sin that they could not appreciate His high principles of righteousness. Every act of His life was misrepresented. Every point of His conduct maligned. Daily He was face to face with the question, "Shall I compromise with wickedness, or shall I continue my plea for the right and perish on the Cross?" To this question there was but one answer possible with Him—others He might save, Himself He could not save. Today, every man, who will, may enter into the fellowship of His sufferings at this point. God save us from drawing

back from the experience. If preaching the Truth brings persecution, may God help the men of this hour to enter into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. If obedience to the plain teachings of the Word of God means giving of our silver and gold to the point where, like Christ, we also shall be poor, God help us to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings. If living the Spirit-filled life means for us the crucifixion of the old self, by the putting down of every iniquitous desire, and a perfect surrender of every power, God help us at whatever cost to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings, for *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him"*.

CHAPTER V.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CHARACTER

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13, 14).

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CHARACTER

Philippians 3:13, 14.

IF there is any one thing upon which the ancients and the moderns agree, it is the admirableness of high character. If there is any one word in which the best thought of heathenism and the highest opinion of Christianity is focused to a point, it is this word—character.

Bartol said, "Character is the diamond that scratches every other stone." Emerson remarks, "Character is more than intellect. A great soul will be strong to live as well as think. Goodness outshines genius as the sun makes the electric light cast a shadow."

Confucius wrote, "What the superior man seeks is in himself. What the small man seeks is in others."

James Russell Lowell said, "When all have done their utmost surely he hath given the best who gives a character-erect and constant"; while J. G. Holland affirms, "Character must stand behind and back up everything—the sermon, the poem, the picture, the play. None of them is worth a straw without it."

The high-minded Christian of the present hour agrees perfectly with each of these opinions; while Paul, the peerless Apostle of Christianity, expresses, in our text, his firm conviction that character in Christ Jesus was the goal of all endeavor; the one end worthy the utmost employment of all of one's energies.

In my judgment, there is no question that such

is the proper interpretation of the Apostle's speech,

"I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended of Christ Jesus.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus".

CHARACTER DEFINED

To undertake the definition of character is indeed a difficult task. The elements that enter into it are so varied and so many that volumes have been contributed to their discussion. Years since, Dr. Armitage, in an address delivered in one of our anniversary meetings asked, "What is character?" and answered, "In the productions of art, it is the genius which gives them birth; in nature, it is the force of action; the fertility of the earth is its character; in mind, the strength of intellect, the firmness of will, the radiancy of benevolence are its character."

But all human attempts at definitions are so inadequate and unsatisfactory that I find relief only in turning to the Divine definitions.

Christ defined it as child-likeness. In Matthew 18:1-5 we read,

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?"

"And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them,

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven".

John Watson, treating this beautiful parable,

says, "As a type of character, the Kingdom was like unto a little child, and the greatest in the Kingdom would be the most child-like. According to Jesus, a well-conditioned child illustrates better than anything else on the earth the distinctive features of Christian character—because he does not assert or aggrandise himself; because he has no memory for injuries, and no room in his heart for a grudge; because he has no previous opinions, and is not ashamed to confess his ignorance; because he can imagine, and has the key of another world, entering in through the ivory gate, and living amid the things unseen and eternal. The new society of Jesus was a magnificent imagination, and he who entered it must lay aside the world standards and ideals of character, and become as a little child."

Paul conceived character as manliness. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, touching our ascended Lord he said,

"And He gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers;

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ:

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

"But speaking the Truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:11-15).

There is no question that the whole point and purpose of the ministry of Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher, is character. When Paul speaks of a perfect man as the end of all ministry,

he makes that evident. When he contrasts such manhood with the weakness that is "*tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness*", he seems to condemn childlikeness; but he is only pleading for that progress which shall lift us above the dangers of inexperience, and the weakness of immaturity, and the sin of instability, to that knowledge and rightness, and steadfastness which made possible a Savonarola, a Huss, a Luther, a Wesley, a Washington, a Lincoln—men who have left their littleness and gone to largeness; men who were characterized by strength and not weakness; men who are not babes to be christened by the sprinkling of water, but adults who have passed through the baptism of fire, to be refined and finished thereby.

But the Apostle and his Master are of one mind. The true character, like the shields of the ancient times, has its two sides—the simplicity, the humility, the credulity, the active imagination, the fervent love, the unprejudiced mind of the child; and also the strength, the assertion, the honesty, the investigation, the intelligent affection, the fixed opinion of the man.

Paul says, "*When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things*". But he does not mean he put away the things just mentioned; only his baby prattle, his misunderstanding, his feeble powers of thought. The best elements of childhood are carried up into manhood and combine with it, and the result of the combination is character.

To illustrate, years ago, you will remember, Arthur Cumnock entered Harvard College. He found the atmosphere of that institution like that which now characterizes most of our universities. The fast set were reckoned the first-folk. The chief end of man was to drink and gamble politely, and wire-pull for fraternities and neglect his studies. With all these odds against him, young Cumnock started to live soberly, studiously, righteously. His conduct so contrasted that of his fellow-students as to render him unpopular at first, and many an hour he must have spent in the sad consciousness of living under the disapproval of his fellow-students. But never once did he resign his ideal. With the simplicity and sweetness of a child on the one side, the uncompromising attitude of a martyr on the other, he lived his life and did his best to remake that of the institution in which he was but a single student among many. Four years passed by, and the class-day of his Senior year was on; and, as the custom was, the class must choose its favorite and do him honor. And when the choice was made, it fell on Arthur Cumnock. In the opinion of those same students he was without competitor. They laid the laurel wreath upon his brow, and publicly proclaimed him the manliest man of them all.

I do not know whether it has ever occurred to you, but it has often been in my mind, that Jesus Christ, the only perfect character this world ever knew, was also a combination of child-likeness and manlikeness. On the one side as innocent, as humble, as sweet, as affectionate, as any baby-saint enfolded in the bosom of God; and, on the other

side, His fixedness of purpose, His fidelity to the right, His unwavering heroism pales the character of a Napoleon, the daring of a Luther, the stability of a Huss, even as the rising sun, by its very brilliance, obscures the most luminous stars that decked the brow of night.

CHARACTER DEVELOPED

The Apostle Paul, in our text, has done more than set up character as the goal of all conduct. He is interested in its development. He realizes that his own attainments are meager, but that life's possibilities are great.

"Forgetting those things which are behind", he "reaches forth unto those things which are before".

The text, with its context sets before us very clearly, and I think somewhat fully, the essential elements that enter into the development of character.

Paul regards high aspirations as an essential impetus. He longs to be perfect and to that end puts forth his endeavor. Disraeli once said, "The youth who does not look up will look down, and the spirit that does not soar is destined to grovel." The words of George Herbert are *apropos*,

"Pitch thy behavior low, thy project high
So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be.
Sink not in spirit, who aimeth at the sky
Shoots higher much than he that means a tree."

It is said of Henry W. Longfellow that when he was about 17 he wrote to his father, "Whether nature has given me any capacity for knowledge, or not, she has at any rate given me a very strong predilection for literary pursuits, and I am almost confident in believing that, if I can ever rise in the

world, it must be by the exercise of my talent in the field of literature. Whatever I do study ought to be engaged in with all my soul, **for I will be eminent in something.**

It is said, that when Henry Clay was a boy, hoeing corn and following the plow in the Kentucky fields, he was dreaming of the day when he should stand in the halls of Congress. Already he was formulating the orations which he should deliver when elected to that eminence; the arguments, with which he would cut down an opponent as he now laid low the weeds by his hoe, he was fashioning.

And who doubts that the dream of the boy Henry Longfellow, and the aspiration of the boy Henry Clay entered as prominent factors into the development to the point of poet for the first and matchless orator for the second!

William Watson, in his poem, "The Fugitive Ideal", writes,

"As some most pure and noble face,
Seen in the thronged and hurrying street
Sheds o'er the world a sudden grace,
A flying odor sweet,
Then passing leaves the cheated sense
Balked with a phantom excellence.

"So in our soul, the visions rise
Of that fair life we never led;
They flash a splendor past our eyes,
We start, and they are fled;
They pass and leave us with blank gaze,
Resigned to our ignoble days."

But, I do not agree with Watson! With the Apostle Paul they did not "pass and leave him with blank gaze resigned to his ignoble days." With Milton, "The vision did not pass and leave with

blank gaze. that noble soul resigned to ignoble days. The vision that came to him when he was a boy, sleeping in a bleak garret—the vision of a poem that the world would not willingly let die—remained, until he had wrought it into verse, and it had lifted him to immortal honors; and, when the blind poet lay dying, as he entered the valley and shadow, he whispered to those who were about him, “Still guides the Heavenly vision.”

Paul also regarded positive hardships as a necessary pressure in the development of character. Speaking of those trying experiences through which he had passed, and by which he had forfeited all honors and all comforts, and come into the bitterest persecutions and the most dreadful imprisonments, he said, *“I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ”*.

Long before Paul another great Apostle of the faith—David—had come into the understanding of this same truth and wrote, *“Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept Thy Word”*.

The history of progress is set in the mold of suffering. Drudgery, endurance, misrepresentations, misunderstandings, oppositions—these have made the world’s great men. Dr Hillis says, “Man learns to swim by being cast into life’s maelstrom and left to make his way ashore. No youth can learn to sail his life-craft in a lake sequestered and sheltered from all storms.”

How Abraham Lincoln illustrates the thought that hardship is a necessary pressure to develop character! Born in poverty, bred in the midst of ignorant people, thrown in early life upon his own

resources, so homely that the girls shunned him, and so ungainly that the boys made of him a laughing stock; when through force of character, and rectitude of thought he rose to the office of President, it was only to feel the more venomous fangs of Washington's fastidious set. The head of the nation was ridiculed as "the ape," called "a stupid block-head," and caricatured as "Satyr." Orison Sweet Marden says, "On reading these terrible criticisms, Abraham once said, 'Well, Abraham, are you a man or are you a dog?' And after the repulse at Fredericksburg he remarked, 'If there is a man out of hell that suffers more than I do, I pity him.'"

Little did the people know what they were doing when they were laying upon him the pressure of such opposition. But history tells us, they were developing his character, and making of him a man beside whom our greatest statesman would seem as small as David looked when he came into the presence of his father-in-law—the king. And they were wringing from him tears that would prove not alone a nectar to the blacks of the south, but the waters of salvation to the craft of the state.

How beautifully Father Ryan, the poet of the South, has expressed the Apostle's thought:

"The summer rose the sun has flushed
With crimson glory, may be sweet—
'Tis sweeter when its leaves are crushed
Beneath the winds' and tempests' feet.

"The rose, that waves upon its tree,
In life, sheds perfume all around—
More sweet the perfume floats to me
Of roses trampled on the ground.

"The waving rose, with every breath
 Scents, carelessly the summer air—
 The wounded rose bleeds forth in death
 A sweetness far more rich and rare.

"It is a truth beyond our ken—
 And yet a truth that all may read—
 It is with roses as with men,
 The sweetest hearts are those that bleed.

"The flower which Bethlehem saw bloom
 Out of a heart all full of grace,
 Gave never forth its full perfume
 Until the Cross became its vase."

A perfect model is a regnant power in the development of character. Paul tells us that he is pressing on toward the goal unto the prize of the high-calling of God in "Christ Jesus". To the Corinthians he wrote, "*Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*" (I Cor. 11:1).

The advantage of Bible study exists in the fact that Christ, the perfect model of character, comes more and more fully before the honest student of the Word. We must see Him before we can be like Him. "*Beloved, * * it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall Appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is*".

Carlos Martin wrote of Wendell Phillips, "He needed not the sting of guilt to make him virtuous. His character shone conspicuous. He was above pretense—a sincere, conscientious, devoted friend. He had a deep love for all that was true and honorable; he always detested a mean action. His Bible was always open on the center-table." I can but believe that that open Book counted for his character, for in that he found his model—"Christ Jesus".

Dr. Armitage says, "The greatest of minds seek after a sublimity like that of Milton; a richness like that of Taylor; a dignity like that of Howe; an earnestness like that of Baxter; a reasoning like that of Paley; a sweetness like that of Cowper; and an eloquence like that of Hall."

But young artists copy the masters. Why should we be content to copy character at second hand? Christ is the only Master in this realm. Milton, Taylor, Howe, Baxter, Paley, Cowper and Hall but poorly reflect Him. The Apostle Paul sets us the better example, and pushing past all these, stays not until he is face to face with the Christ, and calling back to all, invites us to come into this same presence, where "we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image".

But character does not come from merely studying the Christ. It is the direct consequence of receiving from the Christ. We are asked to **work out (our) own salvation with fear and trembling, but we are encouraged by the statement that God worketh in us.**

One of the danger points of the present-day theology is here. Men are more and more disposed to feel that Christ is only our perfect model and that having Him as our pattern, we can, by our own efforts, perfect ourselves. But not so. According to the Scripture, of ourselves we "*can do nothing*". According to the same Word of God, we "*can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth*" us. And the man who surrenders his life into the hands of the One and only Master-builder in the realm of

character, is the one who will be fashioned by those hands into the perfect man.

Henry Van Dyke says, "Do you remember the story of the portrait of Dante which is painted upon the walls of the Bargello, at Florence? For many years it was supposed that the picture had utterly perished. Men had heard of it, but no one living had ever seen it. But presently came an artist who was determined to find it again. He went into the place where tradition said that it had been painted. The room was used as a storehouse for lumber and straw. The walls were covered with a dirty white-wash. He had the heaps of rubbish carried away. Patiently and carefully he removed the white-wash from the wall. Lines and colors long hidden began to appear. And at last the grave, lofty, noble face of the great poet looked out again upon the world of light.

"That was wonderful," you say, "that was beautiful!" Not half so wonderful as the work which Christ came to do in the heart of man,—to restore the likeness of God and bring the Divine image to the light. He comes to us with the knowledge that God's image is there, though concealed; He touches us with the faith that there is no human being in whom that treasure is not hidden, and from whose stained and dusty soul Christ cannot bring out that reflection of God's face."

CHAPTER VI.

CHRIST VERSUS THE POPE

"He is the Head of the Body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:18).

CHRIST VERSUS THE POPE

Colossians 1:18.

POPE LEO died! The Congress of Cardinals concerned themselves with one subject and one only, "who should be his successor?" Throughout the whole world Roman Catholics waited, with the deepest solicitude, that selection. When once it was made, they proclaimed a man "chosen to be the head of the church on earth", and employed the term "the Church" in the most exclusive sense—"the only true Church", and most of them firmly believe that the man exalted to this office was God's selection, just as surely as it was that of the Congress of Cardinals.

Why was it that the millions of Christians, outside the pale of Romanism, regarded this whole subject with comparative indifference? Why is it that these millions think it matters little what Cardinal is pontiff, or whether the selection was made speedily and with great unanimity of opinion upon the part of the voters; or after long and bitter debate, division and strife, as in some notable instances of the past?

Our text answers all of these questions. The evangelical churches of the world make the Bible alike the basis of their faith and practice, believing, with Isaiah, that we are to go to the "*law and to the testimony*" and if men speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them; and the testimony of inspiration here is such as to convince the world's best students of Scripture, the greater portion of its plain, yet

thoughtful people, as to who is the Head of the Church, and as to how the Church is constituted.

I want, therefore, to say that I bear no ill will toward a man because he is a Catholic. I have some friends in that faith, whose fellowship I prize, and whose Christianity I cannot question. But even these know that an honest man has a reason for the faith which he holds, and they expect that he will present his reason with a fervor proportionate to his confidence in it.

"Who is the Divinely appointed Head of the Church?" Elsewhere, I have spoken on "What Priests are Recognized in the New Testament?"; and "Does Purgatory Prepare the Soul for Heaven?" and kindred subjects.

Now to the discourse under consideration—"He is the Head of the Body, the Church: who is the beginning; the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence".

I remark first:

THE CHURCH HAS A HEAD

One of the figures most commonly employed in the New Testament to set forth the "Church" is "the Body". It is the figure here when Paul writes to the Colossians. In writing to the Romans, Paul says, "*For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one members one of another*" (12:4, 5).

In his First Epistle to the Corinthians, the twelfth chapter, Paul employs the same figure, elaborating it to the last possible point, and concludes, "*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into*

one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. But now are they many members, yet but one Body. Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular" (vss. 13, 20, 27). In his Epistle to the Ephesians, he speaks of God as having "*put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*" (1:22, 23).

It is a complete Body. No body is complete without the head; it cannot even live without the head!

It can live without the feet; it can live without the hands; almost any member of the body may be removed and one yet live; but not so with the head. Charles Spurgeon tells us that the Romanists have an extraordinary miracle of their own about St. Dennis, of whom they report the lying legend that after his head was off, he took it up in his hands and walked with it two thousand yards, regarding which a wit remarks, "So far as the two thousand yards is concerned it is nothing at all. It is only the first step in which there is any difficulty."

Why not the first step? Because the body is incapable of it without the head. Not a single step without the head to direct it. When the head is taken away, personality is gone, identity is gone, the man is gone; the body is incomplete.

At the opening of the Chicago University, Dr. Small uttered this eloquent speech, "Scores in this audience will remember that memorial chapel in the city of Florence, commemorating the Medici

family. On either side of the chapel, you remember those sitting statues of two of the later scions of that family, Lorenzo and William; and those statues are two allegorical groups in which the critics have discovered the culmination of Angelo's art. The one group of two figures represents, allegorically, day and night. The one recumbent figure is perfect in poise, perfect in proportion from feet to neck, but where the head of the human figure should be, is a rough, unshapen, unhewn block, out of which gazes the hideous specter of what should become the countenance of a man. As you look upon that unfinished spectacle, does it not occur to you, that Angelo, has, in spite of himself, immortalized a deeper allegory than he intended?" Although one be a Lorenzo, the magnificent, although he have the best command of physical resources, yet is he but a burlesque of a man if the higher spiritual potencies are not enthroned? In other words, no matter how perfect the other members, the head removed, the body is so incomplete as to become a travesty of that high term. God never meant that His Church should be after that manner—it is a complete Body.

It is also a sentient Body. The headless body is insensible. Not so with the Church. Paul, when he writes his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, says, "*We shall live with Him by the power of God*" (13:4). He is speaking not of that future of Heavenly fellowship, but of that which we have in the Church. Peter, in his First Epistle, 2:5, says, "*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house*". If the first man Adam was made "*a living soul*", the last man Christ was made "*a quickening*"

Spirit". There can be such things as dead members of the church, decaying branches tied on by a string of mere profession; but the Church of God, bought by the Blood of Jesus, organized under the hand of the Holy Ghost, is a *'living Church'*, deriving its life from the Head, who, having been raised from the dead, is "*alive for evermore*".

A noted preacher said, "Doubtless you have thought *"The Mariner"* a strange piece of fiction, where the author presents a ship manned by dead men. Dead men spreading the sails; dead men steering; dead men piloting, and so forth, but I have lived to see that allegory realized in the so-called church; I have gone where there was a dead man in the pulpit; dead men rendering the music; dead men taking the offering; dead men filling the pews." Without disputing what the sermonizer may have seen, it is sufficient to say, if so, he was not looking upon the body of which our text speaks, for it, like its Head, is alive forever more. It is built up of living stones—it is sentient.

Moreover, it is an intelligent Body. For the human body the head does the thinking. For that Divine Body called "*the Church*", the same truth obtains—the great master thoughts are with Christ. They control and dominate the members of the body. Their actions, therefore, are according to wisdom; their ways are the ways of sanity. Occasionally a man comes upon some superficial thinker who sneers at Christianity, and utters his criticisms of the Church, and talks loudly of Science and Philosophy, as if the Church were characterized by its folly, while the latter were the exponents of wisdom. But such boasters only bring

themselves into contempt with the observing. It is no wonder that the Church has been, and remains, the embodiment of wisdom, when its Head is Christ, whose wisdom is infinite. It is little wonder that the great Gladstone, when at the zenith of power, while in possession of his every faculty, should have remarked, "Most men at the head of great movements are Christian men. During the many years I was in the Cabinet, I was brought into association with sixty master minds, and all but five of them were Christians."

Henry VanDyke has given a fine page in proof of this assertion of the great statesman Gladstone. In his defense of the Christian faith, he says, "It makes men strong, ardent, persistent, heroic. Nothing truly great has ever been done in any department of the world's work without faith. Think of the faith of our explorers and discoverers: Columbus, who found the New World; the Pilgrim Fathers, who planted it with life; Livingstone, who opened a new continent to civilization. Think of the faith of our men of science: Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Faraday, Henry. Think of the faith of the reformers: Wyclif, Luther, Knox. Think of the faith of the martyrs: Polycarp, Huss, Savonarola, the Covenanters of Scotland, the Huguenots of France. Faith is a force, and those who grasp it, lay hold of something which is able to make them mightier than themselves."

These men, without exception, acknowledged the headship of Christ, and gratefully confessed that whatever wisdom was with them had come from Him. And everyone knows that to these names thousands more, equally famed for their

efficiency, scholarship, and conquering strength, could be added; members of the Church of God, with whose Head wisdom is.

While we have already mentioned the subject of our second remark, in order to illustrate and emphasize some precious truths, we repeat

CHRIST IS THAT HEAD

"He is the Head of the Body, the Church".

There is no question here as to the reference.

The character of Christ is described. He is spoken of as the One *"in whom we have redemption through His Blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature"* (Col. 1:14, 15).

We have no redemption through the pope's blood; the pope is not the image of the invisible God, nor is he the one by whom all things were created, visible and invisible, though they be thrones or principalities, or powers. It is the Christ. He is the Creator. Of Him John had said in his Gospel, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men"* (1:1-4).

Some years since, I read that little volume, "The Son of Man" by the late T. B. Walker, in which he collates the statements made by famed men concerning Christ, and was interested to read the tribute paid to Christ by Jewish men, the very men who in their traditions are taught to reject Him—even they are compelled to admire His char-

acter. Moritz Friedlander says of Jesus, "Always higher, on to unapproachableness grew His personality, including all that is beautiful, lofty, sublime, and Divine, and forcing every one to adoration and self-mobilization. This Divine 'Son of Man' became the world-ideal, and this sublime ideal originated in Judaism, which will ever be remembered as having been predestined by Providence to bring forth such a creation."

He is the Head of the Church! That long line of pontiffs, so much praised in certain parts, pale to insignificance in His presence. One cannot institute a comparison between their characters and the character of Christ without feeling the supremest sorrow that they should ever have been so foolish as to fulfil the prophecy of those opposers, those children of the antichrist, who exalt themselves above everyone, even Christ, and sit in the Temple of God, setting themselves forth as God.

It required 1870 years for even the arrogant, self-exalted church to reach the point where they took the crown of headship over the Church from the brow of Christ, and by the act of an Ecumenical Council, placed it on the low forehead of a pope. It was only after Alexander the VI., the man whose shameful conduct has been the subject of literary subterfuge, and enforced blushes for the better element in Romanism, had passed under the triumphal arch inscribed "Cæsar was a man; Alexander is a god." It was only after Marcellus, at the fifth Lateran Council, had addressed Pope Leo X., "Thou art another God on earth;" it was only after Gregory II. had blatantly remarked to the Greek Emperor, "All the kings of the West reverence the

pope as a God on earth," and the Pontiff Nicholas had written "Wherefore, if those things which I do be said to be done, not of man, but of God, what can ye make me but God?" that Christ was denied the Headship of the Church to which, for centuries, inspiration had assigned Him.

Even now, good Romanists are compelled to do Him the honor of saying, "He is the great spiritual Head", but God mentions Him as the one, the only "Head of the Body, the Church".

His Name is plainly called as the Head of the Church. Go back in the context here to see of whom the Apostle is speaking, and he says, God's "*dear Son*", "*in whom we have redemption through His Blood, even the forgiveness of sins*". "*He is the Head of the Body, the Church*". And a little farther up in the context, He is spoken of as "*our Lord Jesus Christ*".

I do not care to detract in any measure from the good name and the Christian character which some popes have won for themselves; I am not solicitous to deny that the man who, a few years ago, passed from the Roman throne was a man of parts, whose opinions brought progress alike to the church which acknowledged him as its head, and introduced a more liberal policy toward the people of other and more Biblical faiths. But I do say that neither he nor any of his predecessors were worthy to share the throne, or even to be mentioned in such connection with Him, of whom it is written, "*God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the*

earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

This leads to the third remark in this text:

Christ is Head, without competitor or confederate. The fate of Lucifer awaits everyone who seeks Christ's office. It is in vain to say that the man who proposes to share the throne of God is a good man. What of it? The very proposal is the quintessence of rebellion. Lucifer was more than a good man, he was an archangel; and yet Milton has only interpreted Isaiah when he pictures him as hurled with hideous ruin and combustion down to the bottomless pit because he aspired to reign in Heaven. What then shall be the fate of a sinner who sets himself up to reign on earth?

The Israel of the Old Testament is the type of the Church of the New. There was a day when she was a pure theocracy; she desired no other governor than God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and in that day she was blest and blessed. But when the elders of Israel, in their lust for power and their conformity to the nations about, besought Samuel, saying, "*Make us a king to judge us like all the nations*", God answered and said unto Samuel, "*Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them*". He plainly proclaims the ability of the Divine Head to administer temporal affairs. Has that ability waned so that Christ is incompetent to rule in the affairs of His Church, and a common sinner must be exalted to that office?

George W. Searle, in a 360 page volume in de-

fense of Romanism, believes that there never could have been a pontiff had he not been Divinely appointed, on account of the impossibility of such enormous usurpation of power as this would be, without the force of arms to carry it out. And yet, when Israel apostatized, Saul was willingly selected by them and exalted to this office. There never has been a church on this earth which, in proportion as it swung from God, was not tempted to put a man in the place of power. As a rule, every movement away from the true worship of God is toward the deification of man. Think of the action of France, a hundred fifty years ago, in voting the dethronement of the God of Heaven, and exalting an abandoned woman to the seat of worship, and prostrating themselves before that sinner.

Beloved, it is time that those of us who worship the Lamb, should concern ourselves, for both the loyalty of our own souls, and those of every deluded friend. If men will bow down before their fellows, we must join with Paul in saying, "*Sirs, why do ye these things?*" and preach unto them that they should "*turn from these vanities unto the Living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein*", and worship Him.

Napoleon, in a marvelous speech, showed that even the most exalted, conquerors of the earth, potentates of most pronounced virtue, were not worthy to be mentioned with Jesus; while the picture of the Apocalypse describes the hallelujahs of saints and angels to the "*Lamb that was slain*", and who alone is worthy "*to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*", while every creature which is in

Heaven, or on earth, join in giving Him the same, "*and the four beasts said, Amen*". We repeat, He is without a competitor!

He has never named a confederate in office. The Scriptures were never more plainly contorted than when attempt is made to compel their approval of the human headship of the Church. Take the three passages of Scripture, commonly quoted in that connection, Matthew 16:18, "*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church*". If one is bent on making this refer to the person of Peter, rather than to the profession of Peter, "*Thou art the Christ*", the utmost that He could then claim would be that Peter was not the head but the foundation of the Church. An institution does not stand on its head; the head crowns it, instead! It stands on its feet, and Peter would remain the feet of the Church, and perhaps the reason why this more sane interpretation has not been given to this Scripture is found in the fact that instantly it would involve a conflict of inspiration, for has not Paul written, "*Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*" (I Cor. 3:11). In the words of Luke's Gospel, 22:31, "*The Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*", and in John's report of Jesus' words to Peter, "*Feed My lambs*", "*feed My sheep*", "*feed My sheep*", is it not perfectly clear that these are the plain duties of every living pastor? Peter, then, was not a pope to share the office of governor with the Son of God, but a Pastor instead, to do the work of an under-shep-

herd. It would seem, indeed, that the very Scriptures were careful to enter their protest against this apostasy before it ever came to pass, that men might be without excuse, when once they should attempt to exalt Peter to any such an office.

You remember how, when Cornelius met him as Peter was coming in, Cornelius fell down at his feet and worshipped him, and Peter took him up, saying, "*Stand up; I myself also am a man*". And opening his mouth, he said, "*Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons*", putting himself forever on a level with the common saints to enjoy with them that equal grace of God which is bestowed alike upon the high and the humble, and joining him concerning Jesus Christ, who is "**Lord of all**". I believe if there is anything that Peter most longs to return to earth to accomplish, it is to rebuke those who have attempted to thrust him into the place which he so jealously guarded for the Son of God.

If this text means anything, it must mean what it says concerning Christ, "*He is the Head of the Body, the Church*". He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead. And if there be one other sentence in Scripture which makes Him to share with another, in reading this Book a number of times, from Genesis to Revelation, we have never happened upon it.

But finally, will we make mention of His pre-eminence. "*That in all things He might have the pre-eminence*". Mark you, "**in all things**"; "**in all things**"; "**in all things**"!

Mr. George M. Searle has one chapter in his volume on "The Primacy of the Roman Pontiff" and

in the discussion he ardently defends the suggestion. But let us remember that according to inspiration, the primacy is Christ's appointment; the **pre-eminence in all things**, is His inheritance.

I read a sermon years ago in which Dr. A. B. Simpson attempted to mention some of the respects in which Christ is pre-eminent. It was vain endeavor—He is pre-eminent in **all** respects. Pre-eminent as a babe, because begotten of the Holy Ghost; pre-eminent as a child, because wisdom which confounded His elders was given Him; pre-eminent as a carpenter, because He linked Divinity to human labor; pre-eminent as a citizen, because He hated injustice and loved the truth; pre-eminent as a man, because He shared alike the joys and sorrows of all His fellows; pre-eminent as a philosopher, because wisdom was in His lips; pre-eminent as a teacher—*"never man spake like this Man"*; pre-eminent as a preacher, the Truth was in His tongue; pre-eminent as a priest, for He appeared *"without sin"*; pre-eminent as a ruler—*"His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth"*! But why need one keep up expletives? It is in vain, I say! Pre-eminent in **all** things!

But, ere we finish, let us lay emphasis upon His **pre-eminence in the power to save**.

"There is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"! *"The Son of Man"*, and the Son of Man, alone, *"hath power on earth to forgive sins"*. Ah, here, indeed, is His pre-eminence seen at its climax!

Henry VanDyke, in *"The Gospel for a World of Sin"*, says, "If Jesus were not the Christ who came

to save us from our sins, then there is no salvation from sin, no conqueror from Satan, no liberator of souls. We must fight the battle alone against known and heavy odds."

But, blessed be God, we need not fight that battle alone, concerning which He has cried already, "*It is finished*".

We know that Christ has drawn the bolts of the very cells in which the Adversary had incarcerated sinners; we know that Isaiah's prophecy has been literally fulfilled, and Christ has already been anointed to preach Good Tidings unto all men, and to bind up the broken hearts, and not only to "*proclaim liberty to the captives*", but to even open the prison for them that are bound. It is ours to accept His captaincy, and joyfully acknowledge His pre-eminence as Saviour; to ask and receive His absolution from sin; and walk the ways of the earth—saved until time for us shall be no more; and then go up with the saints and angels to tread the streets of the Eternal City, where on every hand His praises shall be heard, and we shall have joyful part in the same.

Oh, men and women of God, go tell how great things the Lord has done for you! Oh, men and women, without God, come and taste and see that the Lord is good. Surrender, and learn from experience His power to save; be victors for time, and conquer for eternity, so that with the Apostle you can say, "*For to me to live is Christ*", and, when face to face with the last grim enemy, shout with triumph in his ears, "*For me ** to die is gain*".

Years since, in the city of Galveston, I was introduced to a Mrs. Hughes, who with thousands

of others had gone through that awful Galveston storm when eight thousand people were destroyed in a night. She told me her own experience, saying her house had gone to pieces and knowing that she was caught in one part with her little girl, while her son was in another, she said, "I was fastened in with my little girl, trying to keep our heads above water, and my believing, Christian boy called to me through the walls and said, 'Mamma, I shall not see your face again, but you will want to know how long I live, and so I will sing.' And with trained voice, for he was a member of the choir, he sang:

'Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.'

And then—the silence came. But," said this bright-faced Christian woman, "even though the song was hushed on this side, it was renewed on the farther shore. He, with the redeemed, is singing it still, and like his Lord, is ever more alive." Christ saves!

CHAPTER VII.

**THE CHURCH AFTER NINETEEN
HUNDRED YEARS**

COLOSSIANS 1:18-24.

"He is the Head of the Body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.

"For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell;

"And, having made peace through the Blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in Heaven.

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled

"In the body of His Flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in His sight:

"If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under Heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is the Church" (Col. 1: 18-24).

THE CHURCH AFTER NINETEEN HUNDRED YEARS

Colossians 1:18-24.

Delivered before the Northern Baptist Convention, Cleveland, Ohio, Sunday night, June 1st, 1930.

THE Christian Church is now celebrating its nineteen hundredth anniversary. Though conceived with the Virgin Birth, it was born at Pentecost following Christ's resurrection from the grave.

Revelation is not a novelty and the Church is not a recent innovation. Revelation is co-existent with man upon the earth; and the Christian Church has held its place in the world and the world's increased attention, for nineteen hundred years.

By Revelation we mean God's communication with and to man. This, we know, began immediately upon man's creation and is recorded in this language: "*God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth*" (Gen. 1:28f.). This was the primary, or original, revelation to man.

The record of the original Church is in this language: "*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there was added unto them (together) about three thousand souls*" (Acts 2:41). Revelation began with the finished creation; the Church was consequent upon a finished redemption.

Our task is not that of tracing revelation through six thousand years; it is rather that of studying

the Church in its development through near two thousand. The task, while fraught with difficulties, should be attended also by delights. Men take great pleasure in tracing their family tree, even when told that they will discover a monkey in the trunk thereof. Surely the saints should find greater joy in a spiritual genealogy that originated with the Son of God. To its consideration, then!

THE CHURCH

This organization is called Christ's Body.

"He is the Head of the Body, the Church" (vs. 18).

"For His Body's sake, which is the Church" (vs. 24).

The figure here employed is appropriate and applicable. The body has no will of its own, but expresses that of the head. Not one of its members moves until the mind has commanded. It is the head that effects the organic unity of the body. Each and every member of the body is nervously, and hence vitally, united with the head.

So it is with Christ and the Church. Our unity and fellowship with Him are alike shown by a surrender to His will; and the proof of our claim to a healthy place in the Church exists in implicit obedience to Christ—the Head.

It is not then, a community of belief, nor an identity of interest, nor a uniformity of language, that makes possible the Church. Those things are associated with, but they are not adequate to an organism. An organism is possible only as the product of a life; and the true Church is created by the Christ life that vitalizes the same.

The figures of Scripture that prove this fact are "*the Head of the Body*", "*the Vine*" and "*the branch-*

es", in both of which there is unity and community of life. Therein is the necessity of regeneration. One must become not only a "*new creature*" as the King James version gives it, but, in fact, "*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation*" (II Cor. 5:17), as the correct translation tells us.

This Body is constituted of the Blood bought.

"*Through the Blood of His Cross, hath He reconciled all things unto Himself*"; so that we who "*were sometime alienated and enemies*", "*by wicked works*", now "*hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death*" (vss. 20-22).

If there is one historical fact of the Church that can never be called into question, by Bible believers, it is the place appointed to the shed Blood of the Son of God. From the Old Testament teaching, where the high priest made an atonement with blood (Lev. 4), through the New Testament truths of "redemption through His Blood" (Eph. 1:7) justification by His Blood (Rom. 5:9), sanctification with His own Blood (Heb. 9:22), to the final victory which is to be accomplished by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony (Rev. 12:11), the Scriptures are harmonized and replete.

That strange deflection from the "faith once delivered" that scorns the Blood, and speaks of it as "the gospel of the shambles" belongs, beyond all question, to fulfilled prophecy, on the part of those who now deny the Lord that bought them, and trample under foot the Blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified. But let us not be misunderstood! We are not supposing that any soul is bathed in the drops of Blood that trickled from Christ's hands, or feet, or side; we are not at

all speaking of the white and red corpuscles, nor yet of the serum in which they floated, that fell from His wounded frame; but we are teaching, as every intelligent man should understand that "*the life is in the blood*". When Christ lay down His life for men He provided by that sacrifice, for their redemption. That truth was the potential one in the early Church, and has never failed in power, when rightly proclaimed.

Baptists, at least, are profoundly interested in the history of Christmas Evans, that remarkable Welshman. He was born December 25, 1766 and named for his natal day, Christmas; converted at the age of eighteen, and, shortly after, he began to preach by memorizing one of Bishop Beveridge's sermons and one of Mr. Rolands.

In spite of his total lack of education, the delivery of these sermons was such as to profoundly move his auditors.

When he spoke before a Baptist Association shortly thereafter, the people said the one to another, "The one-eyed man of Angelsea is a prophet sent from God." And so it proved! In all Baptist history we have scarce had his equal. The time came when his ministry was thronged by the thousands, and when his preaching was with such power that hundreds fell under conviction. He took front rank in the Welsh ministry; and for more than half a century without a stain on his name, and with a mind that grew by the process of self-education, he—a giant in body and in brain, so preached as to impress Robert Hall as being the "tallest, stoutest, and greatest man" that he had ever seen. When at last he was dying at Swansea, July 19, 1838,

in the seventy-second year of his age, and the fifty-fourth of his ministry, he said to those about his bed, "I am leaving you. I have labored in the sanctuary fifty-three years, and this is my comfort, that I have never labored without Blood in the basin." The Church is a Blood-bought Body.

That Blood-bought Body is the custodian of the Sacred Book. That is why Paul speaks of Christ's intention to present its members "*holy and unblameable and unreprouable in His sight*": if they "*continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard*" (Col. 1:22, 23).

That is why Paul, writing to Timothy concerning the oracles of God, said, "*O Timothy, keep (or guard) that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith*" (II Tim. 6:20, 21).

That is why he was careful to base his own contention for the Truth upon that which he also had received (I Cor. 15:1).

That is why John, as he approached the close of the Sacred Canon, felt compelled to say, "*I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this Book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the Book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this Book*" (Rev. 22:18, 19).

Dr. Gaussen, the great theological teacher of Geneva, in his volume on "Theopneustia" says

truly enough, "The Church is a depository and not a judge. She delivers a testimony, not a judicial sentence. She discerns the canon of Scripture; she does not make it. She has recognized its authenticity; she has not given it.* * The authority of the Scriptures is not founded, then, on the authority of the Church; it is the Church that is founded on the authority of the Scriptures."

That is why she prizes the Book; it is her Magna Charta. That is why she has fought foes, fiends and fagots in its defence. Christ is the origin of the Church's life, but the Bible is the source of her light.

That is why the history of Christian martyrdom marks the progress of Church life. That is why you can track the Church of God through seventeen centuries by the Blood line. It was the very insistent practice of Christianity to retain the Bible, study the Bible, exemplify the Bible, and teach the Bible, that brought the wrath of men upon her head. It was when John told Herod what the Bible had to say about monogamy and domestic decency that Herodias demanded his head on a charger. It was when the early Christians proclaimed Jesus King of the Jews, according to the prophecy of Sacred Writ, that their lives and fortunes were instantly put into peril. It was when Diocletian, the Roman emperor, saw the behavior of his sinful subjects unfavorably contrasted by the saintly character of the Christians of his domain, and heard that they talked of a King to come and a new Kingdom—both prophesied in the Book—that he sought to exterminate the entire movement by the beheading of thousands. The chief

charge against most of them was that they were in possession of the Sacred Book.

Dr. Armitage, the great Baptist historian, in speaking of the frightful persecutions that broke out in 303 A. D., says: "Because the Scriptures were regarded as the source of all Christian aggression, the aim of the persecutors was to destroy every copy, and the cry passed up and down the empire, "Burn their Testaments!"

When an African ruler demanded that Felix should give up his Bible, he answered that he would prefer to be burned than to lose the Book.

In Sicily, when Euplius was seized with the Gospels in his hand, and asked, "Why do you keep the Scriptures forbidden by the Emperor?" he replied, "Because I am a Christian. Life eternal is in them; he that giveth up them loses life."

Baptists, at least, ought to be both familiar with this history and sympathetic with the same, for literally hundreds of their martyrs, centuries later, offered their bodies to be burned rather than surrender the Sacred Book.

In the city of Zurich there stands to this day a monument to the honor of Arnold of Brescia. It was erected to that noblest of martyrs. The statue itself is of bronze, and is four meters (13 ft. 4 inches) in height. Arnold stands on the top of the same preaching, his gigantic figure being that of a Monk in long graceful robe. On its base there is another representation of him, as he stands before the crowd who have gathered to hear, holding in his hand the Sacred Book, the Bible.

The history of Michael Sattler should never be

forgotten by the denomination now assembled in this city. He had been a Papist, but through study of the Book, became a Baptist, and insisted upon impressing its precious truths upon the people who gathered to hear him. He was warned, but went on with his work, until, by and by, in 1527, refusing to recant or to be silenced, his tongue was cut out, his flesh was torn with red hot pinchers again and again, and finally his dying frame was flung to the fires and burned to ashes. But he went down to his grave, and through it, to glory, retaining, defending, and proclaiming the Sacred Book.

This trail of martyrdom is almost too gruesome to pursue further. Only let it be known that that infamous invention, the rack, that indescribable custom of torture, the gibbet, that unthinkable brutality of burning women alive, that devilish ingenuity of making a coffin so small that the victim must be crowded into it, unable to stretch out, and then buried alive—no one of these, nor yet all of them combined, brought these children of faith, the truest representatives of the true Church of God, to either recant or compromise. Is it any wonder that the Church lives and that the Bible remains at once her Magna Charta and her charge!

THE CENTURIES

But my theme is, **"The Church after Nineteen Hundred Years"**! Permit me then, to make a hasty review of these centuries; and to dwell briefly at least upon their high spots.

The first three centuries mark the conquest of the Church. From that day when Saul "*made havock*

of the Church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison", and "they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the Word", until that other apparently victorious day when Constantine saw the Roman empire capitulate to the Church herself, what a series of conquests! As the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in its ninth edition, said, "The history of the world presents no phenomenon so striking as the rise and early progress of Christianity. Originating in a country not remarkable for any political, commercial, or literary influence, emanating from One who occupied a humble sphere in the community amidst which he appeared, and announced in the first instance by men of mean extraction, of no literary culture, and not endowed with any surpassing gifts of intellect, it nevertheless spread so rapidly that in an incredibly short period of time it had been diffused throughout the whole civilized world, and in the fourth century of its existence became the recognized and established religion of the Roman empire. When it is remembered that this result was achieved not only without the aid of any worldly influence, but in the face of the keenest opposition on the part of all the learning, wealth, wit and power of the most enlightened and mightiest nations of the earth, the conclusion is strongly forced upon us that a power beyond that of man was concerned in its success, and that its early and unexampled triumphs afford an incontestable proof of its inherent truth and its Divine origin."

The discerning student of history will not forget the vision of the Son of Man. It was after He had endured the world's worst; it was after He

had faced death and conquered the grave, that He met His eleven disciples in the mount in Galilee, and standing there with their adoring eyes upon Him, said, "*All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*" (Matt. 28:18-20).

Therein is the secret of Church success! Its Head is none other than the Son of God; its commission is from His lips; and its empowerment was, and is, in His promised presence.

A recent writer tells us that high up on the Post Office building in New York City, is this inscription: "Neither snow, nor rain, nor hail, nor gloom of night, stays these couriers from the swift commission of their appointed orders."

This is an intended compliment to the faithfulness and efficiency of the old-time postal service men; but it is a poor compliment as compared with that which might have been paid to these first century couriers for Christ; for with them neither fire, nor sword, nor rack, nor gibbet, nor kings, nor devils, nor hell could stay their feet, nor still their tongues, nor even slow their victories.

Gibbon, the historian, says: "While the Roman world was invaded by open violence, or undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion quietly insinuated itself into the minds of men; grew up in silence and obscurity; derived new vigor from opposition, and finally erected the tri-

umphal banner of the Cross on the ruins of the capitol."

So much, then, for the first three centuries of Church History.

The fourth century effected its corruption. There are triumphs that eventuate in defeat. There are victories that result in reverses. There are conquests that destroy the conquerors!

One historian tells us, "In her contest with Rome Christianity succeeded in realizing and giving expression to her claim to universal dominion; but in Rome's overthrow she inflicted an almost fatal wound on herself, when she was unconsciously induced to take the government of a pagan empire as her model for the organization of a spiritual kingdom."

The attainment of Constantine to the emperor's throne, followed as it was by his professed conversion to the Christian faith, seemed like a climax of accomplishment for the Church herself. History reveals that it was an anti-climax instead.

His spectacular conversion by the vision of a flaming cross in the sky, upon which was written, "En touto vika,"—"by this conquer"—is supposed by many to have been only a parhelion, while the phrase, "en touto vika," was the part of a dream that followed.

His occupancy of the throne itself by the slaughter of all competitors, including his sons and even Fausta, his wife, provided poor evidences of personal Christianity, and, although he stopped the slaughter of Christians and restored to them civil and religious rights, he was actuated by personal and state interests rather than those of the Church

itself; while his "middle-of-the-road" policy in the matters of both faith and order was the signal for a descent in spirituality that far exceeded even the Church's growth in numbers and national potency.

For nearly 1200 years, the Church felt the consequences of the Constantine policy, and that period is known to ecclesiastical history as the dark ages. That appellation was not in consequence of the Church's dethronement from power; it was the direct result of her degradation in character. The principles imposed by Constantine produced her prostitution.

He was not so much an advocate of "comparative religions" as he was of "combined religions". His coins bore the Name of Christ on the one side and the figure of Apollo on the other. It was Constantine who conceived "the inclusive policy" and demanded of the Alexandrian bishops that they recognize alike the Arians and the orthodox.

Whether he believed in baptismal regeneration may be questioned, but it is certain, from his delaying his own baptism until he knew himself to be on his death-bed, that he believed in baptismal remission.

It was Constantine also who ignored the New Testament distinctions between Church and Kingdom and by forgetting that *ecclesia* and *basileia* are wholly different words and relate to different Divine institutions, he combined Church with state and claimed that he, rather than a returned Christ, had brought "the Kingdom of God" to the earth.

The product of such procedures occupies large place in the pages of national and ecclesiastical

history. Not only were the Church and the state inextricably interwoven, but the Church and the world were so far identified as to make it difficult to distinguish one spiritual feature of the former.

S. E. Herrick in his volume, "Some Heretics of Yesterday", writing of Savonarola, the very period that is to produce the reformation, gives us this graphic presentation of the times:

"The drama of history presents us with no scenes more fascinating in their splendor or more impressive in their tragedy than those which the fifteenth century saw enacted. Private magnificence reached its zenith and common wretchedness sunk to its nadir. Art achieved its most brilliant triumphs, and religion fell into its dreariest formalisms. Government, nominally republican, was the plaything of strong-handed and unprincipled adventures, who were rich, or mighty, or cunning enough to control the nerveless popular will. Learning among the clergy meant dabbling in scholasticism; among the higher or wealthier laity, some slight acquaintance with pagan writers, and a love for classic antiquities; among the common people there was little or none. It is almost enough, in order to describe the moral and social life of the century, to say that it was the age of the Medici at Florence and of the Borgias at Rome; an age of culture wedded to corruption; an age whose external garb was elegance, whose inmost heart was moral rottenness; an age whose only grand enthusiasms were for art and vice; all other enthusiasms were accounted vulgar and had died out. Patriotism and religion, at least, if not dead, were camatose. The one

needed a Judas Maccabæus, the other a John the Baptist."

It is the custom of Moderns to hold to scorn the theological view and the ecclesiastical life of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Let it be forever known, however, that this is the very age when reformation effected increasing recovery for the Church of God; the age that brought Savonarola, the eloquent, to the fore; that gave rise to the bravest and noblest of all ecclesiastical reformers, Martin Luther; that witnessed the lives and listened to the testimonies of Latimer, Cranmer, Melanchthon, Knox, Calvin, Coligny, William Brewster, and Wesley—a succession of men, saints of God, who sought the recovery of the New Testament teaching and exemplified the purity of Christian life and demonstrated the spiritual power of the Church when disentangled from the state and guided by the Holy Ghost of God.

It is little wonder that those centuries saw apostles of the faith worthy to be compared with Peter, James, John and Paul, and marked Church progress comparable again to that of the first three centuries of ecclesiastical history, having sent her missionaries to, and established her stations and schools in, every continent and island of the earth, exciting even the expectation of a young Mott that the world might be "evangelized in a single generation". This period was climaxed by the production of such as John Eliot, Hans Egede, Ziegenbalg, Cary, Boardman, Judson, Duff, Morrison, William Burns, Gilmour, John Williams, Samuel Marsden, Patteson, Allen Gardiner, Moffat, Krapf,

Livingstone, Hudson Taylor, Clough, Ashmore, and others too numerous to mention.

Is it any wonder that one writing at the close of the nineteenth century, said, "Let those who think Christianity is a spent force ponder the following: when Carey, the first Protestant missionary of the world, went to India, the whole of nominal Christians in the world was about 200,000,000. Now there are about 500,000,000. When he in the eighteenth century went out from Christendom as a missionary to the dark world of heathendom, the population of the world was about one thousand millions. It is now supposed to be about fifteen hundred millions, which is only another way of saying that while the population of the world has increased during this period fifty percent, Christianity has increased 150 percent, and the ratio shows that the cause of Christ advanced more within the past twenty-five years than it did in the seventy-five preceding. Our God is marching on!"

The nineteenth century closed with the question of Christ's disciples once more upon the lips of His followers, "*Wilt Thou at this time restore again the Kingdom*"? Never since Constantine came to his throne were the prospects of the Church so bright or her conquests so incomparable as in the year 1900.

But the twentieth century threatens to repeat the fourth. The most discussed subject of the day is this subject: "Will the Church live?" "Will Christianity be retained?" or is the first dead and the second in the very experience of being cast away?

Newspapers, magazines, books and orators are all discussing this subject. In ecclesiastical circles

it is a theme of insistent argument, while, in world circles, it is brazenly asserted that the question is settled, and the Church is a corpse and Christianity is a divested garment.

These discussions are not wholly without occasion. Never since Pentecost of 1900 years ago has the Church of God faced more or greater enemies than at this moment. The world, the flesh, and the devil were never combined against her more furiously than now. If there is one agency at Satan's command which he has not called to the conflict, we can scarcely imagine its character or its name.

Atheism no longer wears the veil of shame. She exposes her face with pride and boldly affirms her purpose "to wreck the Church" of God and bury out of sight the debris of the same.

Bolshevism, which is a combination of atheism in philosophy and communism in government, enjoys at this moment a fungus growth. Having conquered in Russia by killing millions of Christian opponents, she proposes to carry her revolution of irreligion to every nation of earth, and her emissaries are on every continent and every land.

Modern education has largely succumbed to the Darwin philosophy which is not only, as Haeckel declared, "anti-Genesis", but anti-Bible and anti-Christian! Dr. Gilkey of Springfield, Mass., is reported to have said in his recent Brown University address, "Your generation will see a terrific mortality among churches." A nation wide student conference, one thousand strong, at Evanston, Illinois, said, "We are here to hold the post-mortem of the Church."

Modern inventions have enormously contributed to man's conquest of earth and sea and air, but yet more to his neglect of the Church and to his moral degradation.

Still further, the entire philosophy of Constantine has been reintroduced into the very life of the Church itself, and our greatest single menace is not from without but from within, and threatens the Church of God with a new paganism, with another refusal to distinguish between Trinitarianism and Unitarianism, with the false hope of baptismal remission and consequent unregeneracy, and with the unspeakable affliction of confusing the Church of God and the Kingdom of God, imagining afresh that we can retain the first, after having rejected the historic Christ, and bring in the second without His re-Appearance in glory and power.

The confusion that has resulted from all of this has produced cults out of number and divisions past enumeration. It has undermined in a large measure the seat and source of all authority, it has evilly affected the morale of the Church itself, and deluged the world with waves of crime that stagger, and prospects of war that leave it no rest better than a nightmare.

Country and village churches are being sold to secular uses. City churches are falling in attendance. Missionary funds are suffering annual decline and denominational combinations are being resorted to, to keep up an appearance of progress, until one writer is justified in saying, "The more elaborate our ecclesiasticism, the finer and costlier

our churches, the more sparkling our periodicals, the longer our lists of societies and the more abundant and exquisite their machinery, the smaller our relative growth has become."

What then is the conclusion of the whole matter? Is the Church defeated, or, as some have recently been asking, Is the Church dead?

We answer, "**NO**" to both questions.

The words of Jesus Christ live. They have, to-day, the same meaning that they had when He uttered them: "*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (the Church)*". The conditions to which we have referred simply involve

A CHALLENGE

In a recent sermon before my own church, I laid out all of those arguments, presenting them with a fair degree of fulness, not with the intention of discouraging, but for the express purpose of making them a basis of sound, and sane and even challenging appeal.

The Church of God may be sick from maladministration. We believe she is. She may be disabled by mistaken doses. If we have studied our Bible aright, it is even so.

But she will not die: she will live! She will recover! She will conquer!

John's appeal to the seven Churches of Asia shows a prophetic decline. The Laodicean age, or the last, was the most corrupt. Yet even in that there was enough left to excite the Saviour's promise of "riches" and "clothing" and "ointment".

If He is Head over all things to the Church, the Body cannot die, while the Head lives.

The true Church, then, will continue to function, it is in no danger of death. It can never be! The immortality of Christ insures the immortality of "His Body, the Church".

There are those who both imagine and dare to say, that science will end the Christian superstition and finally put the Church herself out of commission.

Such speakers and writers have studied history all too poorly. What science, pray? The shallow surmisings of the school teachers of this generation are not likely to disprove the Christian evidences that mastered a Newton, a Sir John Herschel, a Kepler, a Davy, a Faraday, a Boyle, a Harvey, a Simpson, a Beale, or a Duke of Argyle, a David Brewster, a Dana, a Hitchcock, a Miller, a Guyot, a Pasteur, a Kelvin and a Dawson.

Even the Soviet leaders of Russia and their propagandists in China and Europe and America are not likely to put out of commission the Book that conquered the intellect of a Cromwell, a Blackstone, a Selden, a Sir William Jones, a William Pitt, a Wilburforce, a Wright, an Earl Cairns, a chief justice Marshall, a Webster, and an Abraham Lincoln.

The literati of the present day who dip their putrid pens in ink, blackened by their own life's experience, are not likely to discredit even the ministry that was revered by a Shakespeare, a Milton, an Addison, a Johnson, a Coleridge, a Sir Walter Scott, and that has been honored in office by a Tauler, a Wyclif, a Huss, a Savonarola, a Luther, a Latimer, a Cranmer, a Melanchthon, a Knox, a Coligny, a William Brewster, a Wesley, a Spurgeon, and a Moody, not to mention thousands of

others worthy to stand at their side and share their justifiable honors.

As one notable writer has truthfully said, "Science had no foundation upon which to raise herself until Christianity supplied the same." Paganism had utterly failed to furnish such. The men, therefore, who are dealing in mere philosophies may discover again, as Greek philosophers had to do, that their theories will either be wholly disproven or essentially reformed by Christian theology; while those theories that "are falsely called Science", will fail every one and be forgotten by the final victors of faith.

Doubtless there are many living opponents of the Christian faith and of the Church of God who, like Haeckel, will on their death beds want the Bible, and like Huxley when they near the end request the reading of I Corinthians 15, and like Darwin, according to Lady Hope, grieve their philosophical meanderings.

The Church of God like its Sacred Book will live and thrive on the very ground that has provided a cemetery for these uncertified claims and these superficial philosophies. Hawthorne was not mistaken when he declared that the little church on main street was the one building that gave promise of permanence to civilization.

For the Church will not only live but as her Master spake the words of mercy to the dying thief who hung at His side, so she, His Body, will minister at the graves of her present opponents.

"Crowns and thrones may perish
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the Church of Jesus,
Constant will remain,

Gates of hell can never,
'Gainst that Church prevail,
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail."

God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved!

Her witness will characterize the close of the age. It was no less an authority than Jesus, "*Head over all things to the Church*", who said, "*This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come*" (Matt. 24:14).

The darkness may deepen: the sky may be filled with still other wandering stars; the moon may hang there like a clot of blood and the sun refuse to give its light, but even then the true Church will have no occasion of discouragement but rather a reason to lift up her head and know that the day of her redemption draweth nigh.

The final conquest of the Church will be complete in the Kingdom. The King will come; His throne will be established in the earth; the scepter of His power shall sway from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. We hold that Blessed Hope, the Glorious Appearing of our great God and Saviour—Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify us unto Himself a peculiar people.

Without such a Hope present conditions would oppress; apostasy would discourage; the prodigious growth of iniquity and crime would cast a shadow on every soul. The skeptical philosophy that abounds would suffice to produce pessimism.

But with that Hope the effect is exactly the opposite, for did not Christ Himself say,

"There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

"Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:25-28).

It was when Paul had finished that most eloquent presentation of this Blessed Hope, and its attendant truths of the Resurrection and Rapture, that he wound up with these adequately inspiring words; *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).*

CHAPTER VIII.

PHILOSOPHY THE FOE OF
CHRISTIANITY

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

"For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:8,9).

PHILOSOPHY THE FOE OF CHRISTIANITY

Colossians 2:8, 9.

SUBJECTS for sermonizing are quite often born out of comparisons between some speeches one has heard and what he knows the sacred Scriptures to say. Such is the one we now propose to discuss!

In connection with the matters now at issue between fundamentalists on the one side and modernists on the other, it cannot be forgotten that philosophy, and particularly philosophers, have played a prominent roll in the whole speculation of evolution. In fact, the early and Greek philosophers were largely advocates of a kindred hypothesis, and the meanest opponents of the Christian faith among modernists have been the teachers of philosophy. Hence our subject!

The necessity of discussing it exists in the circumstance that philosophy does not grow more friendly to Christianity, but rather more antagonistic to the same. Paul's language, therefore, is in no whit out of date, and the warning that he sent to the Colossian Church is needed, not only by my auditors and readers, but by the Christians of the land.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

"For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:8, 9).

I invite your attention to the treatment of this subject under three heads: Philosophy Defined, Philosophy Tested, and Philosophy Transcended.

PHILOSOPHY DEFINED

The word, philosophy, predicates the love of wisdom. That is its Greek-root meaning "philos"—lover, or friend, and "sophos"—wisdom. The thought suggested is altogether a worthy one, and were the study pursued in the right spirit, the results should be both desirable and profitable.

Solomon writes to his children after this manner:

"Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

"For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

"For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

"He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

"Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

"Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

"Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

"She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

"Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many" (Prov. 4:1-10).

Truly, wisdom is the principal thing. Beyond debate, she does "promote those who embrace her"; to the heads of such she gives her "ornament of grace"; upon their "brows" she places "a crown of glory".

We are not here, then, tonight to speak against wisdom or the search therefor; but ere we finish it may appear that there is a wide stretch between what men call philosophy and that which is suggested by the root meanings of the word.

It is a great thing to get wisdom. The world is

infatuated with the thought of securing knowledge, but wisdom is preferable even to knowledge. There are many things one can know that yield no profit. Wisdom deals only with profitable knowledge and is itself such knowledge applied. **He that seeketh wisdom seeketh a good thing!**

It appeals, however, to intellectual pride. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, who were themselves Greeks, quotes from Isaiah 29:14, "*I will destroy the wisdom of the wise*". Of course, it was not true wisdom, for such would not be God's attitude toward the same. Reference is evidently to an intellectual conceit. There is much of the same abroad in the land at this moment. It is an interesting psychological study to have Prof. M——, a man who has made some scientific discoveries, the worth of which to his fellows is not yet determined, speak of Mr. Bryan, one of the most brilliant intellects of the centuries—a man whose fruitful life blessed millions—as "not intellectual * * but merely an emotionalist". Such is the conceit of men who follow specific branches of learning. And it was against such that Paul hurled his Biblical and yet stinging questions in the Corinthian Letter, "*Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?*"? Goethe is probably speaking both from experience and from observation when, in *Faust*, he makes his hero a student longing for the pleasures of knowledge, but who, while thus engaged, changes his course from the speculative to the sensual and sells out his soul to his adversary, Mephistopheles.

The very conception of wisdom entertained by the ancients is a proof positive of the egoism that

was ever inherent in the same. You remember that Minerva was the favorite goddess of philosophy, and that she was supposed to have had no mother, but to have sprung full-formed from the head of Jupiter; in other words, to be a perfect child of brain-intellectuality. To be sure, there are exceptions to all rules. Lord Bacon was the child of a believing mother and on that account he approached philosophy from another standpoint, saying, "The road to true philosophy is precisely the same with that which leads to true religion; and from both one and the other, unless we would enter in as little children, we must expect to be totally excluded;" while Secker tells us that "nature teaches us that those trees bend the most freely which bear the most fully". It is a parable of Paul's contention: "*God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are*".

Philosophy has been guilty of too often proposing the impossible. The man who attempts a rational explanation of practically everything in the universe, and, while about it, disregards the God who made it, is not likely to flood the world with light.

David said, "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God*", and any philosophy of the universe, or philosophy of human life that takes not God into account, can never profit the world. Its musings will but muddle men; its philosophisings will re-

sult in confusion for readers; its professed light will be but darkness. The one reason that the science of the Bible stands the test of time, and will; that the Bible's psychology has proven true to man's experiences, and will ever so abide; that Bible history is increasingly shown to be absolutely dependable; that Bible sociology will forever remain sound, and that the Bible's philosophy of life has never yet failed a man who truly tested it, is due to the circumstance that the revelation of the Bible is properly based—*"In the beginning God"*. Given God, we have an explanation of the Universe. Given God, we have a starting point for scientific research. Given **"God"**, we have from Him the fixed principles of human behavior. Given **"God"**, we are confident that a sound philosophy of life exists. Given **"God"**, we have an explanation of Israel and the Church. Given **"God"**, we have a ground of government and occasion of good-will among men; and a prophecy of a finally perfected world. Away with your philosophies that deny, forget, or even neglect God! They are vain deceit. They are after the traditions of men; and *"after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"*. What profit has come to the world from Aristotle, Plato, and DesCarte; what from Bacon and his school; Hobbes Locke, Hume, Hartley, Mill, and Condillac?

Of the opponents of the Christian faith, what names exceed Kant, the writer of *"The Critique of Pure Reason,"* Hegel in his *"Absolute Idealism,"* Spencer, the advocate of mechanism; Nietzsche, with his brutal survival, and Haeckel with his un-

solved Riddle of the Universe? These are men who impoverish the world as they pass.

PHILOSOPHY TESTED

Philosophy is no new science, if, in fact, the term "science" may be at all properly employed in speaking of it. It is one of the most ancient branches of learning. The millenniums have known its exponents. In fact, the present-day teachers constantly appeal to the philosophers of two and even three thousand years ago.

The brief spurt of Greek supremacy produced a whole school of philosophers, and contrary to the Darwin theory, their kind have not improved with the centuries, and while there are many varieties among them, the species as a whole has rather declined.

Philosophy itself is far less in vogue to-day than it was two hundred years before Christ. The reasons for this are not far to seek. I shall mention three of them. It has often proved a vain deceit; it has failed to extricate itself from the traditions of men, and it has been weighted with the rudiments of the world.

It has often proved a vain deceit!

Tillotson said, "Philosophers have given us several plausible rules for peace and tranquility of mind, but they fall very much short of bringing men to it."

John Foster tells us that "in the academy the philosophers made a great many excellent discourses and asked Panthroidas how he liked them. He answered, "Indeed I think them very good but of no profit at all, since you yourselves do not use them."

Beyond all question, Socrates was among the first of the Greeks. His innovations of thought resulted in his condemnation to death, and in prison he drank the hemlock that sent his spirit into eternity, but even that Greek made a better contribution to freedom of intellect than to the sum of knowledge.

It might be well to remind our readers in passing that the Church didn't administer it, since at that time the Christian Church had no existence. It is now the uniform custom of every anti-Christian spokesman, and, even of every professed Christian advocate of Darwinism, to charge every known persecution to the Church, without ever a hint even that by "the church" they mean apostate Rome. If there ever was a case of overworked falsehood, "the church versus Galileo" is an instance. Whenever those advocates of evolution who find no scientific defense for their doctrine meet the slightest opposition to their speculation, they seek to cloud the whole question by saying that it is another case of the church against Galileo. Read Professor More's "Dogma of Evolution" and be forever silenced on that subject. It was the offended scientists who sent the lone Galileo to judgment and scaffold, and who, in their reaction from that mistake, swing now to the opposite extreme and give open arms to speculative Darwin.

But with Socrates it was Meletus, the poet, and Annytus, the tanner, and Lycon, the orator—all of them members of the patriotic party, who said, "Socrates is guilty first, of denying the gods recognized by the state, and introducing new divinities, and second, of corrupting the young." But

as death faced him he found only this crumb of comfort—either it would mean a dreamless sleep or a new life among the departed fellows where he might test out his philosophical principles, and he cared not which. In Wisconsin University some-time ago a student of philosophy committed suicide in order to find out about immortality.

Plato is still a prime favorite with the professor in this branch of learning, but it is extremely doubtful whether his dream of "the republic" has made any substantial contribution to the actual states of history, or whether his doctrine of "good as the absolute ground of all being and identical with Deity" has advantaged the world. In fact, Dr. Bates charges against all heathen philosophies that they professed themselves to be wise in their speculations but became fools in practice, many of them ending their lives in suicide, so insufficient are the best precepts of mere reason to relieve us in distress.

The religion of Israel produced the greatest people known to the early centuries of history, and the religion of Christ has given to the world modern civilization. But if philosophy has ever made a state great, or a generation happy, history has failed to make a record of it.

It has failed to extricate itself from the traditions of men.

That is the meaning of the Apostle's words.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men" (Col. 2:8).

Ward Beecher said, "What we call wisdom is the result, not the residuum of all the wisdom of past ages. Our best institutions are like young

trees growing upon the roots of the old trunks that have crumbled away."

That is the very principle that certain philosophers have sought to disprove, and their endeavors have been all in vain. Plato imagined himself original and, when he failed to find in creation the clear evidences of a creator, supposed he was blazing for his fellows a brand new path, but the truth is that that was the weakness of his whole philosophy. Having disdained the roots of wisdom both revealed and illustrated, he failed to provide a new shoot that could take root for itself and fill the world with fruitful branches.

Aristotle attempted to state the relation of the godhead to the world without adopting either the expression or conception of his predecessors. Like other sensationalists, he simply succeeded in demonstrating the language of Scripture, "There is no new thing under the sun".

The trouble about philosophy is that it attempts to sweep all millenniums with a small field-glass and to sound the ocean depths of life with a six-foot plummet, and the result is often ridiculous. You can't judge society by a village section; much less can you understand millenniums by the study of a minute, or the nations by the appearance of a man.

Albert Edgar Bruce recently contributed the following poem to a liberal paper.

"PROVINCIALISM"

I judge all the Dagoes by Tony Cattini;
I judge all the Japs by the one that I know;
I judge all the Slovaks by Moritz Koppini;
I judge all the Chinks by my wash-man, Wing Po.

I judge all the Spaniards by Pedro Garcia;
I judge all the French by Alphonse de Bernard;
I judge the Egyptians by Ibin Ben Kia;
I judge all the Hindus by Boma Singh Kard.

I ain't traveled far from the place I was born in,
But I've seen the world, for it's all come to me;
Some odd foreign face I meet up with each mornin'
From countries way off, beyond the deep sea.

You can't tell me much about these strange races,
For ain't I seen all of 'em, right in this town?
I know their queer dress and their funny shaped faces—
White, black, red and yellor and lots of 'em brown.

They're diff'rent from us, and I'm blamed if I like 'em;
They talk in a lingo you can't understand;
They make me so mad that I most want to strike 'em.
Why didn't they stay in their own foreign land?

Of course they may have me in close observation,
To find out what kind of a man I may be;
But how can they know of our glorious nation?
I wonder, if they judge my country by me?

We advise the students of philosophy to commit
to memory this poem.

It has always been weighted with the rudiments
of the world.

*"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and
vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments
of the world" (Col. 2:8).*

"The world by wisdom knew not God" and students by philosophy have never yet found Him. Charles F. Banning, writing recently of philosophic atheism, said: "I can explain it best by an illustration. While in the army I was stationed for four months at Camp Meade, Maryland, drilling negro troops from the South. We had noticed that they had no enthusiasm or ambition and little endurance. Most of the men who came into

camp seemed like new men within a few days under the regularity of the army food and discipline. These men, however, did not improve as the other men. After a careful examination it was discovered that these men had hookworm and did not know it. The hookworm was sapping their vitality and ambition. Practical atheism affects one much the same way. Before one knows it, he has shut God out of his life."

A little while ago there was a convention of teachers in philosophy held in one of our Western cities. A speaker stood before them and said, "Of all the outstanding men in our department, so far as I know there are but four who do not hold to a materialistic, mechanistic theory of the universe." If that be true, how perfectly that illustrates the Apostle's words—

"For the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

"But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

"Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world

to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

"And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

"That no flesh should glory in His presence.

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

"That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (I Cor. 1:18-31).

This text leads us to our last point:

PHILOSOPHY TRANSCENDED

"In Him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

"And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power" (vss. 9, 10).

Let three things be understood then:

First, **The true wisdom is with God.**

How easy it is for the most learned of men to depart from the true source of wisdom when once any taint of skepticism has come upon them. A widely-known Professor, recently declared that if he had to choose between atheism and fundamentalism he would choose fundamentalism, because, as he added, "The teachings of atheism are contrary to the teachings of science"; and yet, the same man turns about and says, "However, fundamentalism is at fault in that it attempts to transgress into the known when its province as a religion is with the unknown." We ask, Since when?

The Christian faith, in both its Old Testament form and its New Testament expression, deals with both the known and the unknown, time and eternity, with both the mortal and the immortal, with both the world that now is and that which is to come. We would commend to all such the

statement of John, who rested his faith upon that which he "had heard with his ears", had seen "with his eyes", had "handled with his hands" of the Word of Life (*1 John 1*); and who on that account, added, "*Hereby we do know that we know Him*" (*2:3*); and again, "*We know that, when He shall Appear, we shall be like Him*" (*3:2*). We know also that "*we have passed from death unto life*" (*3:14*). We know that "*every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God*" (*4:2*). We know "*that we dwell in Him*" (*4:13*). "*By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His Commandments*" (*5:2*). "*We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the True God, and Eternal Life*" (*5:20*). Our science is not a mere hypothesis; our philosophy is not a series of speculations. With us "observation" and experience combine to make knowledge sure.

That wisdom is manifested in Christ. The Apostle Paul had occasion to say, "*I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him*". Charles Spurgeon, famed alike for his clear thinking and his incisive and convincing speech, said, "Wisdom had had its time, and time enough; it had done its all, and that was little enough; it had made the world worse than it was before it stepped upon it; and now God says, "Foolishness shall overcome wisdom; now ignorance, as ye call it, shall sweep away science; now (saith God) humble, childlike faith shall crumble to the dust all the colossal sys-

tems your hands have piled.' He calls his warriors. Christ puts his trumpet to his mouth, and up come the warriors, clad in fishermen's garb, with the brogue of the lake of Galilee—poor humble mariners. Here are the warriors, O Wisdom, that are to confound thee; these are the heroes who shall overcome thy proud philosophers; these men are to plant their standard upon thy ruined walls, and bid them fall forever; these men and their successors are to exalt a Gospel in the world which ye may laugh at as absurd, which ye may sneer at as folly, but which shall be exalted above the hills, and shall be glorious even to the highest heavens."

He is our explanation of all things.

"Without Him was not any thing made that was made.

"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.

"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name.

"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

"And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

"For the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:3-5, 9-14, 16-18).

John Huss, the Christian martyr, once dreamed

that the pictures of the Christ which adorned his walls had been obliterated by the Pope. Waking he was greatly grieved. The next day he dreamed again that the painters were restoring the pictures in far more glorious form than they had previously held. He then interpreted his dream to mean the veritable truth that, though the image of Christ might be temporarily obscured, it would return again and again and be always the hope of the nations. And he saw his dream fulfilled in the work of Luther, who with consummate ability brought to the people a fresh revelation of the Christ.

We affirm it our faith that though philosophy may obscure the Christ, and science, "so-called", may seek to efface Him from the thought of the world, He will return in even more glorious form, the express image of the Father, and in the light of His countenance darkness shall flee away and men shall come to know "even as they are known".

CHAPTER IX.

SOME SATISFACTORY MODELS

SOME SATISFACTORY MODELS

I Thessalonians 1:1—4:14.

THE Church at Thessalonica originated in the face of furious opposition. The report of it, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the Book of Acts, shows that Paul evinced great courage in entering in to the Jewish synagogue and for *“three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead”*.

The fruit of this preaching was a certain number of Jewish converts and a larger number of Greek, *“and of the chief women not a few”*.

“But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people”.

The consequence was that Paul and Silas, in order to end the uproar and create greater safety for the new believers, departed by night and went in turn to Berea and Athens and on to Corinth.

It is easy to understand how the Apostle's heart would be ill at ease until he had heard how the uproar turned out, and knew the safety of his Christian brethren.

To that end he had sent Timothy from Athens to bring him a report; and now, to encourage the little body of believers, he writes this First Letter, probably in the year A. D. 54.

It had, as Scofield suggests, a threefold object: to confirm the new believers in the fundamental truths of Scripture, to exhort them to holy living,

and especially to comfort them concerning some believers who had fallen asleep. Inasmuch as the time since his departure was short, in all probability, these believers had been put to sleep by the opposition.

The somewhat natural division of this First Epistle we shall attempt to follow in this discourse, and consequently talk to you on a Model Salvation, a Model Servant, and a Model Sanctification. However, we shall follow this outline of the Book with discussions devoted to the great Biblical doctrines of the Return, the Resurrection, and the Rapture, which are introduced into the fourth chapter.

Since framing the outline for this sermon we have discovered that Dr. Scofield, in the Scofield Bible, presents a similar, in fact, an almost identical, outline of the same.

We call attention first to

A MODEL SALVATION

His salutation completed (1:1-3), he addresses himself to this subject of salvation in the remainder of the chapter. What he has to say might be considered under the following suggestions: salvation as evidenced in consecration, as it existed in the form of ensamples, and as it sounded out the saving word.

It was evidenced in true consecration.

"Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake".

Paul was one of those preachers who needed not to make a defense of his own conduct, and re-

quired not from others a recommendation of character. His unselfishness in service, his consistency of conduct, his evident character, had all been as an open book, and friend and foe alike had seen in him, and heard from him, nothing that demanded explanation or required defense.

On the other hand, his very consecration to the cause which he had but recently espoused was in clear evidence of his sincerity in action. Robert Morrison, that great missionary, at the call of whose name the pulse of the Church of God is quickened, gives us an insight into his very soul in this circumstance. After his conversion he raised the question, "Lord, where shall I serve?" And he tells us how it was answered. "I learn from Thy Word that it is Thy holy pleasure that the Gospel should be preached *"in all the world for a witness unto all nations"*. Thou hast given commandment to Thy servants unto the "end of the world" to *"preach the Gospel to every creature"* promising them Thy presence. When I view the field, O Lord, my Master, I perceive that by far the greater part is entirely without laborers, or at best has but here and there one or two, whilst there are thousands crowded up in one corner. My desire is, O Lord, to engage where laborers are most wanted."

That was the spirit that sent him to the heathen land and made him a burning and a shining light against its blackness of darkness. And that is the spirit of conquest, wherever found in the Church.

Paul's salvation effected in him an ensample.

"Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having re-

ceived the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.

"So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia".

Herein is a twofold instance of ensample: to them, first, Paul had become an example, and second, they, in turn, became ensamples to all that were in all Macedonia and Achaia.

The business of the world is carried on largely by samples. The great factories of earth sell their products through samples; fruits of the earth are sold after the same manner, by samples. It is no wonder that Christianity is judged by samples. The overwhelming majority of men do not read the Prophets or the Apostles. The Letters of Paul are largely left, as it were, in unbroken envelopes. But they do read you, and they read me. We are the living "*epistles* * * *known and read of all men*". If it were possible today to say of the church-members, as Paul said of the Thessalonian Christians, "*Ye were ensamples to all that believe*", what spiritual power would be engendered thereby! "*Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth*" (Rom. 14:22).

Chauncey M. Depew, writing of his personal experience when he was in his ninety-first year, in the form of a Holiday Greeting to the World, said among other things, "The essence of happiness in this world, and salvation in the next, is to live in Christ, to absorb His spirit, His love, His all-embracing humanity."

That spirit will, if truly entertained, never fail.

The woman, who gave birth to John Chrysostom and brought him up in the ways of truthfulness and piety, excited from a heathen's lips these

words, as he looked upon her and thought of her life, "Oh, what wonderful women these Christians have!"

The mother of Gregory, that spiritual giant of the fourth century, was seldom seen, we are told, except as she attended worship, or carried baskets of food or clothing to the poor, or went visiting the sick; while the Godly mother of Bernard is said to have trained him, giving him utterly to God, and in the eagerness of her impassioned devotion, to have inspired him with the highest spirit of service. You have all heard that story, that doubtless had a truthful origin, of how a Sunday School teacher put to her class the question, "What is your favorite version of the Bible?" One answered, "The King James", Another, "The American Revision", a third, "Moffat's New Testament". One lad, whose Christian mother justified his remark, said, "I like my mother's version best; she lives it!" The best exposition of sacred Scripture is a holy life.

Paul was a power with his converts in proportion as he could truthfully say to them, "*Be ye followers of me,*" and the Macedonian Christians were effective with their unregenerate neighbors in proportion as they were "*ensamples to all that believe*".

But, as "*faith without works is dead*" so Christianity demands more than a holy life. It demands an aggressive ministry; and I find a third point in this model salvation that requires emphasis:

It sounded out the saving word.

The Apostle says,

"From you sounded out the Word of the Lord not only

in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

"For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the Living and True God;

"And to wait for His Son from Heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1:8-10).

It will be remembered that this was the chief characteristic of the Apostolic Church. When Saul of Tarsus raged in his persecution against the people of Christ, he succeeded in scattering the Church, not in silencing it. In fact, his opposition accomplished exactly the opposite result, for

"They that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the Word.

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

"And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

"For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

"And there was great joy in that city".

Later this same Philip bore the word of testimony in the presence of the treasurer of the Ethiopians, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen, and preached unto him Jesus, and his baptism followed; and doubtless a church for Northern Africa was born out of that witness.

The greatest single need of the Church of God today is that of witnessing. In the language of the Word, the last affirmation of the ascended Christ was, *"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea,*

and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth". Would God that every man of us, and every woman member of the Church militant might be able to say with Catherine Hankey:

"I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory,
Of Jesus and His love.
I love to tell the story,
Because I know 'tis true;
It satisfies my longings
As nothing else can do.

"I love to tell the story:
'Tis pleasant to repeat,
What seems, each time I tell it,
More wonderfully sweet.
I love to tell the story:
For some have never heard
The message of salvation
From God's own holy Word.

"I love to tell the story;
For those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting
To hear it like the rest.
And when, in scenes of Glory,
I sing the new, new song,
'Twill be the old, old story
That I have loved so long!

"I love to tell the story;
'Twill be my theme in Glory,
To tell the old, old story
Of Jesus and His love."

But we pass to the second point in our study:

A MODEL SERVANT

Here we speak of Paul himself, and you will find in the Epistle a defense of our claim.

First of all, **He was a courageous servant.** This is evidenced in the statement,

"For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

"But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention.

"For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

"For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness.

"Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the Apostles of Christ.

"But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

"So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us" (2:1-8).

It is impossible to follow the Apostle Paul through the assiduous labors recorded in Acts, or trace his steps, as those are revealed in these Epistles, without marveling at the courage of the man. He does not ask, as did Caleb in the Old Testament, for the hardest task to be assigned to any servant of God; but, like the true warrior, takes his way to the very spot where the fight is thickest, and there exposes his person to any danger incidental to victory. There can be little question that the martyrs of all the ages have been inspired and enheartened by the Pauline example. When he faced the block without fear, saying, as he drew nigh to that decapitation, *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall*

give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His Appearing", he was clearing the path for martyrs who should follow, and was exhibiting a spirit of courage that would sustain them in kindred ordeals.

There is an echo of Paul in the experience of Latimer and Ridley. When you remember that their faith had been subjected to every conceivable indignity, made to endure every suffering that was possible to leave them life, including an attempt to freeze them to death in the tower of London, where they spent a winter without fire, and how at last they were led forth to be not only thawed out by the flame, but consumed in the same, joyfully they went, and the old man Latimer, cheerfully encouraged his friend by saying, "Be of good cheer, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light by the grace of God such a candle in England as I trust shall never be put out."

One of the most popular hymns of modern times is known as "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus." The hymn was written by Rev. George Duffield, a Presbyterian minister. It originated after this manner: one Sunday a young Episcopalian clergyman preached to five thousand men in Jayne's Hall, Philadelphia. His text was Exodus 10:11. The sermon was said to be one of the most wonderful of modern times. All Philadelphia was deeply stirred by a very great revival. The preacher, young Dudley A. Tyng, threw himself into the work with great heartiness. He was one of the noblest, bravest, manliest of men. The following Wednesday, after preaching the great sermon, he left his study for a moment's rest, going out to

his barn. There was a mule at work there in the power machine, shelling corn. He paused to stroke the mule's neck, when the sleeve of his silken gown caught in the cogs of the machine and his arm was literally torn out by the roots. Just before he died, his father at his bedside asked him if he had any message to send to the men in the great noon-day prayer-meeting and to the ministers associated in that work. "Tell them," he said, "to stand up for Jesus!"

On the Sunday following his death, Rev. George Duffield preached from Ephesians 6:14 and read the verses of the hymn as he had written them the day before. The Superintendent of the Sunday School had them printed. Later a Baptist newspaper, publishing the same, music was found for the words, and the Church has joined heartily in the music ever since because of the inspiring sentiment that the words contain:

"Stand up! stand up for Jesus!

Ye soldiers of the Cross;
Lift high His royal banner,
It must not suffer loss.
From victory unto victory
His army shall He lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed.

"Stand up! stand up for Jesus!

Stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you;—
Ye dare not trust your own;
Put on the Gospel armor,
And, watching unto prayer,
Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there.

"Stand up! stand up for Jesus!

The strife will not be long;

This day the noise of battle,
The next the victor's song.
To him that overcometh,
A crown of life shall be;
He with the King of Glory
Shall reign eternally."

The greatest needs of the Church of God, in this hour, is the courage to be a Christian.

He was a conscientious servant.

"For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the Gospel of God.

"Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

"As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

"That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His Kingdom and glory" (2:9-12).

This language strangely contrasts a certain course of conduct characterizing these latter days. There is an enormous amount of complaint on the part of evangelists because so little work now opens for them. The failure of evangelism is not wholly due to the apostate condition of the Church. The professionalist may blame himself for much of it. His methods have broken the entire system down and have produced with the sanest and most spiritual of church people a certain antipathy to the whole procedure. In America, at least, evangelism has been commercialized, and because one man with the enormous backing of the churches of great cities was able, by the adoption of rather questionable methods, to secure enormous sums for a meeting of a few weeks, hundreds of others grew equally ambitious and commenced to ape in the

matter and carry about with them a great company of salaried assistants, women workers, boy specialists, pianist, chorister, soloists, tabernacle men, book table women, and demand of those who sought their services what was known as "an expense account" of travel, entertainment and advertising, that together with the offering required at the end, would exceed a century outlay on the part of the early Christian church. In addition to this unscriptural and indefensible charge many of these professionals have exercised a ministry that has been fruitless so far as any definite results were concerned.

Two men, who have been much in the ascendant in recent years in America so far as crowds were concerned, one of them from over seas and the other native to the soil, are men, who though they address thousands through the co-operative endeavor of the churches that call them, have never been known to hold a meeting anywhere that added any considerable number of people to the churches thus engaged and burdened. The unfortunate result is that evangelism itself is discredited and faithful evangelists are finding it even more difficult to secure work than the faithless, since their methods are uniformly less spectacular and consequently less popular with the jazz-loving age.

In all this we are not attempting at all to say that all evangelists ought to labor as Paul and his companions did, **night and day without charge** to anybody, for we believe that the Church of God is often guilty of withholding more than is meet and suffering spiritual poverty as a result. But we are saying that the show of the spirit of sacrifice

on the part of evangelists, and above all, a blameless behavior among them that believe, together with a ministry of exhortation and comfort and warning would result in a worthy walk on the part of them called unto the Kingdom and glory of Christ.

He was a commissioned servant.

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

"For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judæa are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

"Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

"Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

"But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

"Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His Coming?

"For ye are our glory and joy" (2:13-20).

Paul here affirms afresh that he had originated no Gospel, but had passed on to them that which he had received, even the Word of God "*which effectually worketh also in you that believe*". He reminded them that their experience was like others, the experience of suffering, and still more like that of their Lord and His Prophets, who had been killed, and now His Apostles who were suffering

persecution. And yet, the great Apostle reminds them that these things are all forgotten in the joy and rejoicing over them as trophies through the Gospel.

Possibly one secret of Paul's power was his consciousness of a commission from the Lord associated as it was with His promised presence. We believe that there is such a thing as a daily commission and a daily direction of the Spirit. Each morning brings us new duties; each day makes its new demands, and both duties and demands require new guidance. But we have a sure promise from the ascended Lord, "*When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth*"; "*He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you*". It is doubtful if Paul ever spent a day without the sense of Divine presence. Therein is the secret of the Apostle's power, and therein is the measure of any spiritual success enjoyed by the present disciples of the Church of Jesus Christ.

But our future study brings us to

A MODEL SANCTIFICATION

"Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

"And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the Gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith;

"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

"For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

"For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

"But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that

ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:

"Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you, in all our affliction and distress, by your faith:

"For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

"For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

"Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

"Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

"To the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints".

"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

"For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

"That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

"Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

"That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

"He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His holy Spirit.

"But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

"And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more:

"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own busi-

ness, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

"That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

"For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the Coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep.

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

"Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (3: 1-4: 18).

This sanctification voices itself in a steadfastness in obedience to the holy will and in an adequate objective.

Their steadfastness was the Apostle's comfort.

"Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

"And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the Gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith;

"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

"For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

"For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

"But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you;

"Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you, in all our affliction and distress, by your faith:

"For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

"For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

"Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?"

"Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you" (3:1-11).

It would be easy to go into history and bring abundant and beautiful illustrations of steadfastness both in the faith and in the service. Savonarola would be a fine subject for such an illustration. Knox and Calvin could scarcely be equalled. Their indomitable wills and their determined conduct would not only illustrate but embellish the whole discussion. But the average man might feel a fear of failure when such outstanding examples were set before him and secretly say in his own soul, "I am not made of the same kind of stuff, and can never attain to the heights of faith or reveal the rock-ribbed stability of such exceptional and outstanding souls!"

I bring you, therefore, an illustration from common life, one that will show the way to the humblest among us. It comes from "The Treasury", and is related in the following words:

"There is no use in keeping the church open any longer. You may as well give me the key," said the missionary in Madras, as he stopped at the door of a little house of God in a village where natives had once professed Christianity, but had declined in interest and quit attendance, returning to their idols. The woman to whom he addressed these words was poor in purse but steadfast in spirit, and she objected. The missionary added as he looked on her sorrowful face, "There is a place

of Christian worship in the village there, only three miles off, and those who want really to serve God can walk that distance!"

"Oh, sir," she pled most earnestly, "do not take the key away. I at least will go to the church daily; I will sweep it. I will trim its lamp and keep it burning; and I will go on praying. Some day God may hear and a blessing may come."

So the missionary said, "Oh, well, keep the key then," and went his way. Some years afterward he returned to that same village and to his surprise he found the church crowded with repentant sinners. A great harvest of souls had been reaped and the steadfastness of this Godly woman was the secret of the whole success.

Their sanctification was the will of God.

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

"To the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

"Furthermore then we besecch you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

"For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

"That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

"Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

"That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

"He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but

God, who hath also given unto us His holy Spirit" (3:12—4:8).

The word "sanctify" conveys the idea of becoming morally or spiritually wholesome, pure. Such is the product of Christianity itself. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. We are convinced both from Scripture and observation that the work of grace in the heart of the believer produces a holy life, and in proportion as life itself is surrendered to the government and guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is unblameable and effective.

There are a great many people who seem to think that sanctification is wholly an emotional experience and an end in itself, and they widely proclaim that they have received "the baptism of the Holy Ghost and are wholly sanctified." But time will shortly prove whether there is anything in the profession. If they increase and abound in love toward one another and toward all men, if they behave in an unblameable way, if they walk uprightly, if they abstain from evil, if they defraud not their fellows, if they despise not men, but on the contrary set themselves assiduously to the tasks of a Christian and, day by day, by deeds that demonstrate their faith, prove their continued fellowship with the Father, then the sanctification which true Godliness would disclaim may yet be seen in them.

It is a fact as Rev. A. E. Barnes-Lawrence says, "God is still seeking for men whom He can entrust with power. The Church of God is crying out for them, amazed at the feebleness of its own ministry and worship. The millions about us are

looking for deliverance from their sin and misery, and the Holy Spirit is waiting to effect it by us. The gift of spiritual power is not less for all Christians to-day than at Pentecost. There was an opened Heaven then—is there not an opened Heaven now? There were opened hearts and opened lips then—why are there comparatively few opened hearts and opened lips now? If this gift is for all, then we Christians ought to possess it. If it is lacking, why is it lacking? These are questions each one of us should earnestly ask. It is not so much our usefulness that is at stake, as it is the glory of God and the hastening of His Kingdom.”

Their spiritual success was the Apostle's great objective.

“But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

“And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more:

“And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

“That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing” (4:9-12).

Such is the objective of the true Church to this hour, and such also is the desire of every genuine regenerated believer.

“My gracious Lord, I own Thy right
To every service I can pay,
And call it my supreme delight
To hear Thy dictates and obey.

“What is my being, but for Thee,
Its sure support, its noblest end?
'Tis my delight Thy face to see,
And serve the cause of such a Friend.

"I would not sigh for worldly joy,
Or to increase my worldly good,
Nor future days nor powers employ
To spread a sounding name abroad.

"'Tis to my Saviour I would live,
To Him who for my ransom died;
Nor could all worldly honor give
Such bliss as crowns me at His side.

"His work my hoary age shall bless,
When youthful vigor is no more;
And my last hour of life confess
His saving love, His glorious power!"

CHAPTER X.

**THE RETURN, THE RESURRECTION AND
THE RAPTURE**

THE RETURN, THE RESURRECTION AND THE RAPTURE

I Thessalonians 4:13-17

THESE three great words deserve each a separate and extended discussion. The only reasons, therefore, for trying to bring them within the limits of a single chapter exist in two circumstances. First, the discussion of the Kingdom, through which we have just passed, has involved very many of the features of both the Return and the Resurrection; and secondly, Paul, by the pen of inspiration, links these all together in both logical and doctrinal order. With that marvelous brevity which is the soul of inspiration, he presents them in five short verses:

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

"For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the Coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

"Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:13-17).

This inspired statement is to the whole subject of the Return, the Resurrection, and the Rapture, what the architect's preliminary sketch is to the finished structure. In each instance it remains

for the workers to fill in and to fill up. A good student will, in a Spirit-led research of the Word, find material at hand for the completion of the great doctrines that Paul here briefly, yet boldly outlines. As the stones wrought into the temple of God were each ready for its place, requiring not the touch of the hammer, but rather a perfect knowledge of the plans and careful placing, so the man who works on these great doctrines, with Paul's plan before him, will find no need to change, carve, or unnaturally constrain the sacred sentences of Scripture. When properly put together, they give perfect proof of the Divine plan, and provide an unanswerable argument for pre-millennialism. Men have sometimes sought to set Peter, or Paul, or John against Jesus; but on this subject it will be seen that inspired servants and Divine Lord speak together.

In the presentation of these great themes to the Thessalonians, Paul speaks of the Second Coming, the First Resurrection, and the Supreme Rapture.

THE SECOND COMING

It Is to Be Both Literal and Personal. To speak of the Lord's Return as a mere figure of speech that is to know no literal fulfilment, is little less sacrilegious than the total denial of inspiration. To identify that Return with the coming of the Holy Spirit, or with the experience of death, is to despise the Master's own differentiations. He was extremely careful to distinguish between the office of the Son and that of the Spirit. The Son was manifested in the flesh—*"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us"* (John 1:14); the Spirit was

contrasted with the flesh—*“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”* (John 3:6). The Son’s office was that of sacrifice and substitution—*“The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep”* (John 10:11); the Spirit’s office was that of illumination, instruction—*“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you”* (John 14:26). The Son’s personal absence from the earth He declared to be a necessity to the Spirit’s appearance in the Church—*“It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you”* (John 16:7).

If the plain references to the Return of the Lord do not involve a personal coming, language has lost its meaning. For the comfort of His disciples, sorrowing over His approaching departure, He said, *“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again”*. In the same discourse He said, *“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you”*. The men in white that stood by at the Ascension said to the anxious onlookers, *“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven”* (Acts 1:11).

It is little wonder, then, that Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, employs the phrase, *“The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God”*. There is not a hint in Scripture that the

Lord is ever to be identified with death—which the Bible denominates an “*enemy*” to be eventually “*destroyed*” (*I Cor. 15:26*). This attempt is, as Ottman suggests, a shift, by which some have sought to blunt the keen edge of Scripture. That Christ is representatively present in the world by the Spirit, no man disputes; but that there is another coming “*for which we look*”, a revelation of His presence, which “*every eye shall see*” is the contention of the Book. Our hymnology—than which no truer theology has ever been written—sets that hope to sweetest harmony; and yet to tear the expectation of a personal Return out of your best hymn book would not leave it in such tatters as would be that more blessed Book—the Bible—when you had torn the same from its sacred pages.

The Time Is Indefinite; the Event, Imminent. “*Of that day and hour knoweth no one, no, not even the angels of Heaven, but the Father only*”. But “*Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh*”. It is little wonder that Paul—perfectly familiar with his Lord’s speech—should have written to Titus, concerning the grace of God, which had appeared, bringing salvation to all, “*teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and Godly, in this present world; looking for that Blessed Hope, and the Glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*” (*Titus 2:12, 13*).

The wisdom of making this great event imminent, and the date of it indefinite, exists in the fact suggested by Baines, namely, that disciples were to be so living in the hope of it, that they would not be surprised if it occurred, while not so confidently

dating it as to suffer disappointment in its delay. The argument that this event could not be "*at hand*" nearly two thousand years ago, and yet, so remote as time has proven it to have been, ignores alike the difference between man's and God's computation of time, and the transcendency of the event. If with God "*a thousand years * * are * * as a watch in the night*" when it is passed, we see no difficulty in the Spirit's expression, "the time is at hand."

Again, the proportions of this event are such as to make that language not only permissible, but accurate. In the far West a carload of passengers were excited by the announcement, "We are coming to Shasta. Look!" Windows were pushed up, men and women put out their heads, to behold that snow-capped peak, full before them. And yet, as one put it, "I rode on and on, from a little after break of day until high noon, and still we had not reached its base; and when the Western sun had dipped far toward the horizon, glancing backward, we beheld its bold, beautiful peak, glorious with the vesture of the sun." You could not have said that of a hill. A hill a mile away is not at hand; but one hundred and fifty miles away, and Shasta is "at hand," The Second Appearance of Jesus, as compared with the most important of human events, is so splendidly transcendent that no wonder those seers, realizing something of its mighty significance, should have lost the sense of distance and time, and exclaimed, "*The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh*"! or else, speaking for that Spirit who does not measure time by minutes and hours, but rather as it relates itself to eternity, say, "The Lord is *at hand*" (*Phil. 4:5*).

His Coming Will Perfectly Accord with Prophecy. For some time there has been a discussion in the pre-millenarian ranks as to whether the "any moment" theory of the Second Appearance could be retained; one school contending that is a necessity of the interpretation of Scripture, and another that we can certainly recognize the fulfilment of prophecy, and that some portions of this, not having occurred already, must come to pass before we see in the heavens the "*sign of the Son of Man*". This problem finds its solution in the very fact that the last letter of prophecy, named as preliminary to the Lord's Appearance, may have its perfect fulfilment, and yet the most of professed Christian men fail so to mark the movements of time as to clearly recognize the perfecting of the Divine plan. When Jesus appeared the first time, how few there were that saw in the Babe of Bethlehem the completion of prophecy! The visit of the star-led men from the East and the inquiry of the song-surprised shepherds seem to have found an answer in the faith of Simeon and Anna and in the fears of the criminal Herod, but to have left unmoved multitudes of men that were supposed to be the great Scripture students of the day.

Again, the certainty of a lapse of time between the Coming of Christ for His people and His Coming to the earth with them, cannot be disposed of by dubbing it "a theory to meet a difficulty of the pre-millenarian view." In a previous chapter we have already seen that there are two comings described in the twenty-fourth of Matthew that are so absolutely unlike as to demand an explanation. That explanation is found in the fact that Christ

comes for His saints (*I Thess. 4:16, 17; II Thess. 2:1*); an appearance which is apart from "*the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints*" (*I Thess. 3:13*) to take His throne and "*judge the world in righteousness*"; and, to this period the Tribulation seems unquestionably assigned. The conversion of the Jew is at its close, and the "*wars and rumours of wars, * * earthquakes*", convulsions of nature, and so forth, both naturally and scripturally belong to the same time!

The full proof of these assertions we postpone to the discussion of the Tribulation and the Transilation. But for the present, let the Word of the Lord Jesus instruct us, "*For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled*" (*Matt. 5:18*). Dr. Arthur Pierson tells us that in 1882, when the transit of Venus was occurring, some German scientists, at Aiken, S. C., had drawn an elliptical circle upon a great stone, from which they made their observations. Later, they presented a request to the city that this stone might remain undisturbed until one hundred and twenty years had passed and another transit of Venus had occurred, at which times the then-living scientists might make their observations and compare them with the work of 1884. Pierson reminds us that 120 years is a long time; every throne will have been emptied of occupant after occupant, and the map of the world will have been made over; for aught we know the march of the millennium may have begun, but prompt to the day, the hour, the minute, the transit of Venus will be on. Such is the accuracy of science. But again and again the

even greater accuracy of prophecy has been put past dispute. Read Zechariah's description of the first appearance of Jesus in His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, "*Riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass*", and remember this, that over seven hundred years intervened between the declaration and the deed. Generation after generation had passed; almost countless kings had been born to the various thrones of the earth; the little sentence, for the most part, was forgotten by even Bible students; and yet, in perfect accord with the Word of God, it came to pass. So it will be again when "*His feet shall stand ** upon the Mount of Olives*", and "*Out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem*", and His scepter shall extend "*from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth*", "*for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*".

THE FIRST RESURRECTION

It Will Be Concurrent with the Saviour's Appearance. "*The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first*". The word "first" here simply assigns the resurrection of the righteous dead—when "*this corruptible must put on incorruption*" to precedence over the marvelous change of the living saints—when "*this mortal must put on immortality*". The rest of the sentence, however, makes the Return of the Lord and the resurrection of the saints concurrent events—the latter the instant resultant of the former. At the last trump that resurrection will occur "*in a moment, in the twinkling of an*

eye" (*I Cor. 15:52*). "Then they that are Christ's at His Coming" (*I Cor. 15:23*). A. J. Gordon truthfully remarks, "Any doctrine of the resurrection dissociated from the Advent, must be false; * * no atonement apart from the Cross; no resurrection apart from the Coming." It is at "*the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*", that there is to be a "*gathering together unto Him*" (*II Thess. 2:1*). A writer tells of the old colored saint, father of a numerous family, who lived in Northern Georgia in 1833, when the notable meteoric display, known as "the falling of the stars," occurred. Being awakened by the noise and confusion in the street, he looked out from the window of his humble home, and seeing, as he supposed, the stars of heaven falling like snow flakes, he thought the end had come, and quickly roused his wife and children, saying: "De day ob de Law'd am at han!" Hurrying them into the streets, where the scene was indescribable, the old man turned to his companion and said, "Ol' 'oman, de Law'd am a comin'; and jis' you take de chil-un along up to de public squar' and stop dar 'till I come. I'se gwine down in de guardin' an' see old Massa git up, and jist as soon as he do, him and me 'ill come along up to de squar' and we'll all go up to meet de Lawd togedah!" That man, incapable of reading the Word for himself, had not listened to the reading and explanation of the Scriptures in vain. He knew that the Saviour's re-appearance would be the signal for the resurrection of every sleeping saint.

It Will Be Accomplished by the Saviour's Voice.
"The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the

trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first". It is doubtful if there be a great event of the future that has not already been enacted upon a small scale—an adumbration of that which is to come; it is equally to be questioned if there be a great truth that has not found its symbols in some circumstance of the past. The resurrection is no exception! The resuscitations of the New Testament—recorded to the credit of Christ—are the shadows of the resurrection. They were accomplished, everyone, by the Saviour's voice. To the widow's son He said, "*Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak*" (Luke 7:14, 15). To Jairus' daughter, "*I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked*" (Mark 5:41, 42), while to Lazarus, who had lain four days in the grave, "*He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth*" (John 11:43, 44). It is said that Calhoun was unwilling to die until they should bear him again to the Senate chamber that he might listen to Clay's voice once more—the voice he regarded as the most eloquent known to the tongue of man. But the voice of Christ will be so much more eloquent that by it the dying shall be revived and the dead quickened into life again. "*The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live*".

The Resurrection Will Concern Only the Sleeping Saints. "*The dead in Christ*" are all that are mentioned as having any part in this resurrection (1 Thess. 4:16). The explanation is at hand. "*The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the First Resurrection,*

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection" (Rev. 20:5, 6). It will require a more ingenious man than has yet employed tongue or driven pen to disprove the two resurrections of Scripture. The number of instances in which the first and second resurrections are spoken of, the easy explanation of such passages as Daniel 12:2 and John 5:28, together with the meaningful phrase "*the resurrection from the dead*", as employed in Luke 20:35; Philippians 3:11; Acts 4:2—making the first resurrection clearly elective—form the chain of argument which such men as Baines, Blackstone, Gordon, Brooks, West and others too numerous to mention have forged on the anvil of the Word. The translation of Daniel 12:2 by Tregelles, "*And many from among the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake. These (that awake) shall be unto everlasting life. But those (the rest of the sleepers who awake later) shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt,*" instead of being "a theory created by a pre-millenarian to carry his point, and absolutely unknown to commentators," as one writer at least contends, is approved by such eminent rabbis as Saadia Haggion and Eben Ezra and employed by some of the best commentators, while the refusal to let the word "*hour,*" in John 5:28, 29, refer to at least as long a period as has already been covered by its use in John 4:23 and 5:25, reveals an indisposition to be convinced. However, the utter absurdity of straining, or spiritualizing Scripture is only reached when one opponent of two resurrections comes to treat Revelation 20:4-6, and contends that the first resurrection, there spoken of, is not that of persons

at all but of "principles," an interpretation which, as one has already suggested "would present the spectacles of 'principles' being beheaded 'for the witness of Jesus,' 'principles' refusing to worship the beast, 'principles' with foreheads and hands on which they decline to receive a mark, and 'principles' over '*such the second death hath no power*', but which shall be '*priests of God and of Christ*'. Following this to its logical conclusion, 'the rest of the dead' must also be 'principles,' so that we could have no resurrection of persons at all."

It is no argument against two resurrections to remind us that for centuries "reverent students of the Bible" knew nothing of it, any more than it is against the Great Commission, which, for the same length of time, was overlooked, neglected, and, when brought to light, ardently disputed. But to accept this Biblical doctrine is to receive an inspiration to holy living such as that which characterized Paul, who cutting loose from all things that bound him to the world, affirmed his willingness to count them all but loss, "*if by any means (he) might attain unto the RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD*".

THE SUPREME RAPTURE

Returning to our preliminary sketch again we find the Apostle describing it in these words: "*The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*".

Three features of the Rapture are here clearly suggested. It will be signalized by the re-wedding

of body and spirit; it will be characterized by the change of the mortal and the corruptible, and it will consummate the communion of the saints and the Saviour.

It Will Be Signalized by the Re-Wedding of the Body and Spirit. The clear significance of the phrase "*even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him*", is to the effect that "*the spirits of just men made perfect*" are now with God. But their bodies lie buried in sea and on land. Our coming Christ will bring the spirits down with Him, and at the sound of His voice the graves shall give up their dead. And when the body and the spirit, divorced by the last enemy, meet in the presence of our Master, He by His Word will so wed them together that neither man nor devil will ever again divide them asunder. If one could conceive the glory that shall clothe these bodies of ours, when redeemed from humiliation, they are "conformed to the likeness" of our Lord, and the splendor that shall mark our "spirits"—"made perfect"—he would somewhat realize the meaning of the eternal marriage of the two.

This is the hour, and the event, of which the Apostle wrote to the Romans—"The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. * * For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body". It is little wonder, therefore, that an Old Testament Prophet, who was speaking to quicken Israel—"dead in tres-

passes and sins"—should have expressed the very thought that will characterize that glad hour when the voice of the Son shall proclaim the approaching Rapture; and men shall know the more remote and more blessed meaning of Isaiah's words, "*Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead*" (26:19). We have read Ingraham's "Prince of the House of David," and have tried to imagine the joy of that marriage occasion when Lazarus, whose recent decease had thrown every participant into pitiful sorrow, now resuscitated, lent by his living presence, such surpassing happiness as no wedding party had ever before experienced; but we confess frankly that the joy of the hour when all perfected spirits and all glorified bodies shall be joined by the word of the Lord Jesus cannot be compassed by the imagination! **Rapture!** is the word.

It Will Be Characterized by the Change of the Mortal and the Corruptible. "*The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory*". What an hour? At that moment those that have come out of their graves, in the full realization of their eternal conquest, will almost tauntingly ask of their defeated foe, "O death, where is thy sting"? while those that have not slept, but, by the Coming of Christ the Master, have put on their immortality, will voice their conscious triumph

in the speech, "O grave, where is thy victory"? and sing their joy in the sentence, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ". Dr. Gordon's comparison—"the charcoal and the diamond are the same substance, only that one is carbon in its humiliation and the other carbon in its glory. So is this tabernacle in which we now dwell, in comparison with our house which is from Heaven"—is not only full of beauty, but Biblically justified. When, however, one comes to speak of the saints perfected in spirit, soul and body, there are no objects of earth with which to liken them. Jesus said, "*They are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection*" (Luke 20:36).

It will Consummate the Communion of the Saints and the Saviour. The phrase "*shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*" involves a twofold communion—the communion of one with another, and of all with their Lord. The closeness of that communion, and the sweetness of that fellowship finds no expression sufficient, short of the marriage relation. "*They that were ready went in with him to the marriage*" (Matt. 25:10). It is little wonder that on the consummation of this event there should be heard the voice of a great multitude as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunder, saying, "*Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Wife hath made herself ready*" (Rev. 19:6, 7). We confess frankly that when all of this imagery of prophetic promise

passes before one's mind, he begins to understand the spirit and speech of Samuel Rutherford, who, while he languished in prison at Aberdeen, divided his time between singing God's praises on the one side, and pleading for the re-appearance of His Son on the other, and we marvel not at his speech: "O fairest among the sons of men; why stayest Thou so long away? Oh, heavens move fast! Oh, time, run, run, and hasten the marriage day, for love is tormented with delays!"

CHAPTER XI.

HEAVEN AND OUR CELESTIAL FLIGHT

I THESSALONIANS 4:13-17.

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

"For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the Coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4: 13-17).

HEAVEN AND OUR CELESTIAL FLIGHT

I Thessalonians 4:13-17.

CERTAIN ministers disparage any preaching about Heaven! In the search for popularity, some have discovered that the thing to say is that they are not trying to fit men for Heaven but for earth; and since the first man is of the earth, earthy, he likes that statement of religion. Sometime ago one writing from London, and paying compliments as undeserved as extravagant to a Modernist minister, said, "According to him this New Theology is the Gospel of the humanity of God and of the divinity of man," and he is fond of the phrase, "I am trying to fit men for earth, rather than for Heaven."

It is doubtful if the ministry has any such vocation. Men have never been deficient in their interest in earthly things, nor particularly unfitted to follow its possibilities, find the solution of its problems, avail themselves of its commercial rewards.

We need a John Bunyan to come back and criticise us for the "muck-rake" business, and if possible, persuade us to take our eyes off the earth occasionally, and take a look at Heaven. It is related that King Henry II. once asked the Duke of Alva if he had observed a certain eclipse that had occurred that year. "No," replied the Duke, "I have found so much business to attend to upon the earth, that I have found no time even to look up to Heaven." That very expression is significant as applied to the century to which we belong. It voices the

conduct of a great multitude, and it opposes the teaching of God's Word. "Other worldliness" is the need of the hour, and "upper worldliness" the very heart of the Gospel of the Son of God. Why am I not justified in inviting your attention to this theme, "Heaven and our Celestial Flight"? The text not only teaches this doctrine, but lays the foundations of its belief, by telling us of the resurrection body; by hinting what are to be our supernatural abilities, and by describing our celestial flight.

THE RESURRECTION BODY

Permit three remarks about it.

It will not depend upon the heart-beat. There is a natural body—it lives by the heart-beat. Out of the heart are the issues of life. "*The life of the flesh is in the blood*". The body in which Jesus dwelt before His crucifixion was a natural body. Its life depended as much upon the heart-beat as does that of yours and mine. That was not at all true of His resurrection body; in it the heart was still speared and open. To Thomas, He said, "*Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing*". No less an authority than Dr. Howard Kelley, the great Baltimore scientist and surgeon, said there was not a drop of blood left in the veins of Jesus' body. The New Testament record makes it clear that His heart broke and emptied its contents into the pericardium, and that, in turn, poured it upon the ground, following the withdrawal of the sword point. So when risen it was no longer a natural body, dependent upon the

action of a natural origin, the heart; but it was a body animated by the Spirit, and He has a spiritual body, and our resurrection bodies shall be like it, for when we shall see Him we shall be like Him.

Our resurrection bodies will not be subject to sickness and death. Speaking of their state in the Millennial period, John, in the Revelation, says, *"God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away"* (21:3, 4).

That is the description upon which Horace Stanton bases his remark of the resurrection body, "It is immortal. It cannot be pierced, nor injured by accident or enemy." And is not Stanton confirmed in this statement by the words of the Apostle Paul, *"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory"* (I Cor. 15:51-54).

Some years ago, when suffering with rheumatism, every joint racked with pain, Mrs. Riley hung on the door near the head of my bed, and where I could behold it constantly, Dr. A. B. Simpson's chart of the Four-Fold Gospel, and some of the passages taken from God's Word and printed in

great red letters gave promise of the time when pain should be no more. It was instructive and comforting. In the day of health we did not prize it, but, in the day of sickness and suffering, we gave it some proper esteem, also the provision of God's grace that proposes eventually to put this away and make Christ Conqueror against the last enemy, and we shall be able to say of that supernatural hour, what Frederick W. Faber said when he wrote:

"Hark! hark, my soul! angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore;
How sweet the truth those blessed strains are telling
Of that new life when sin shall be no more.

"Onward we go; for still we hear them singing,
'Come, weary souls, for Jesus bids you come!'
And through the dark its echoes sweetly ringing,
The music of the Gospel leads us Home.

"Angels, sing on! Your faithful watches keeping;
Sing us sweet fragments of the songs above,
Till morning's joy shall end the night of weeping;
And life's long shadows break in cloudless love."

It will not know limitations and deficiencies. Paul, in his great fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, makes that fact clear. Every limitation and every defect is to be left in the grave. The body that was sown in corruption is to be raised in incorruption; the one that is sown in weakness is to be raised in strength; the one that is sown in dishonor is to be raised in glory; the one that is sown a natural body is to be raised a spiritual body. The great Dr. Guthrie, speaking of Heaven, described it after this manner, "A city, never built with hands, nor hoary with the years of time; a city whose inhabitants no census has numbered; a city

through whose streets rush no tides of business, nor nodding hearse creeps slowly with its burden to the tomb; a city without griefs or graves, without sins or sorrows, without births or burials, without marriages or mournings; a city which glories in having Jesus for its King, angels for its guards saints for its citizens; whose walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise."

There are some things about us that ought to make a man reflect upon the beauty of all this, and rejoice in the assurance of its coming. I looked at the old blind man grinding the organ on the street, and his blind wife, holding the cup and appealing to passers-by for help, and hoped that they were Christians and would one day walk the earth for a thousand years with vision perfect. I looked at the man, both of whose legs were cut off and great leather pads were used to protect them while he dragged a stump of a body about the world, to hope that one day, in a resurrection body, he would walk the ways of the millennial world, and finally the streets of the Celestial City in a perfect body, his feet pressing the paths of the one, and the golden pavements of the other. I looked the other morning at the poor soul dragging himself down the sidewalk, his limbs, there, but useless from the knees; but the bend of the knees themselves had been made the feet on which to do his painful dragging. But if he is a man of God, there is coming a day when that defect will be corrected and the limitations that hamper will be known no more. These vile bodies shall be changed into frames like unto Christ's glorious body, perfected in every part.

Now the Word of God, regarding these resurrection bodies, involves a second remark:

THEIR SUPERNATURAL ABILITIES

These are to be expected in spiritual bodies, and the Word of God makes clear the answer to that expectation. Christ's resurrection body had transcendent endowments, with abilities never possessed by animals or men, but perhaps always known to angels. We are told that the men of the resurrection shall be equal unto angels (*Luke 20: 36*). Dr. F. B. Meyer, in one of his addresses delivered while traveling in the States, said, "I visited Canterbury Cathedral. After I had wandered through the vast edifice, the verger asked me whether I would not like to see the crypt, and I readily assented. But I soon regretted that I had done so; for, as he opened the doorway that led to the dark recesses of the vaults, there met me a cold, chill atmosphere, heavily laden with the moldy smell of corruption and death. I was ashamed to show any reluctance, after having asked to see the burial place of the nation's great men, and proceeded to descend a winding staircase. The darkness was so dense that I could not see a foot in front of me, but the verger called to me that I would find an iron railing at hand, and by following that I would be guided safely to the crypt. I descended then, into the darkness of the tombs. On reaching the bottom, I was surrounded on all sides by black vaults, but in the distance I could discern a light, on approaching which, I found that the crypt really opened upon the cloister gardens of the old cathedral. There the glorious Spring

sunshine was bringing flowers into bloom, and in the midst of the garden there was a beautiful fountain playing, and I then realized how through darkness I had come to the bright glory of the Spring sunshine." He then applies it to the resurrection, likening our passing into the gloomy darkness of death, and our coming forth into the brightness of the Divine presence to take our place at the right hand of the everlasting Father, where there are praises forever more. But the illustration fails signally at one point as a fit illustration, namely, when Myers went down, he had the same body that he brought up from the crypt. He was unchanged in person and powers and passing out of the darkness into the light wrought no change. But it will not be so with us. *"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump"*.

Charles H. Gabriel was thinking of more than regeneration; he must have had the thought of the resurrection before him when he wrote his hymn, "Oh, What a Change," for it reads,

"Oh, what a change! From the darkness of night,
Into the noontide of God's shining light,
Out of my weakness to strength in His might,
Oh, what a change! Oh, what a change!

"Oh, what a change! From my hunger for bread,
Into the place where His children are fed,
Into the blessing of life from the dead,
Oh, what a change! Oh, what a change!"

Two or three respects in which this will be both marvelous and supernatural:

We will be indifferent to heat and cold alike. These changes in the seasons which seem to be essential to the life and vigor of the physical world

are the basis of no little suffering in the world of man. Who can read the story of the mounted police of Canada, perishing in the cold of sixty degrees in the upper Northwestern Province, without a hurting of the heart? And who can think on the pitiless nights of mid-winter and the ten million little children scantily covered, with no fire on the hearth or coal in the stove, shivering the long night through, hoping for break of day when, by sheer physical action, they might start the blood to warmth; or who can think of those tropical regions where men swelter even at mid-winter, without coming into some keen appreciation of what it will mean to the resurrection body, suffering neither heat nor cold?

Someone says, "But does the Bible teach this?" Yes, it does! The interplanetary space knows a cold of which we dream not. Think of 270° below zero, if your imagination can be stretched so far, and that is what the scientists say can be found in this great untraversed territory. Untraversed, did I say? Not so. Natural bodies do not live there, and could not; but spiritual bodies will pass through it without the least difficulty. Those ministering spirits, who are sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation, constantly so do. The angels who come from the far away Heaven to the earth wear no livid countenances. When Jesus ascended, He knew the places through which He was to pass, for He Himself had taught that His Father's House was far away. He had no fear of this unthinkable cold. Down through it came Moses and Elijah, but no chill oppressed them when suddenly they stood on the Mount of

Transfiguration, face to face with Jesus and in full view of Peter and the other two Apostles.

Nor can heat hurt! The Book of Daniel tells us that the fiery furnace was heated seven times hotter than its wont. So intense was the temperature that the men who took hold of the three Hebrew Children to fling them into the furnace, perished without the touch of the flames, the very heat itself leaping out to strike them dead; and yet the Hebrew Children, attended by the Son of God, walked in that flame unharmed. It was hot enough to burn away the bands with which they had been bound when cast into the midst of it; but their bodies had no hurt (*Dan. 3:25*).

Again, you will remember that in Judges 13:20 the angel of the Lord appeared unto Manoah's wife, to announce the coming of her child, and for him Manoah took a kid and offered it with meat offering upon the altar, and we are told, "*It came to pass, when the flame went up toward Heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar*". It was hot enough to consume the sacrifice, but it had no effect upon the angel. The chariot that bare Elijah to Heaven was a chariot of fire. John, in the nineteenth of the Revelation, the seventeenth verse, speaks of an angel "standing in the sun", that molten center of our part of the universe. Marvelous bodies we will have, and since pain, sickness and death are impossible to them, they must of necessity be immune from both heat and cold.

They will be free from the law of gravitation. The risen body of Jesus could ascend into Heaven, as well as return to earth, without the slightest

danger of a crushing fall, as did the body of every angel that ever came from Heaven on an errand of mercy, or to bring a Divine message, and as did the bodies of Moses and Elijah, and all them that rose at the time when Jesus came out of the grave. That is the meaning of our text, "*We which are alive and remain unto the Coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*".

This present body is held down by the laws of gravitation, which men tell us are fixed and inexorable. Our future bodies will know no such clog. I wonder if it could be that this is a symbol of the great spiritual fact that, in proportion as men are Christlike, the world does not attract them. Seven times, Horace Stanton says, Jesus has traversed the space between earth and Heaven. He came down previous to His birth. At His crucifixion He went up to Heaven, because He said to the thief at His right hand, "*To day shalt thou be with Me in paradise*". Then His spirit returned to earth to inhabit the resurrection body again; then in the resurrection body He ascended from the Mount of Olives, and, as He swept through the azure, they watched Him ascend (*Luke 24:51*) even to the right hand of God. But He came back to visit and win Saul of Tarsus to Himself, and comes near enough to that mighty Jew to say, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me"? and make Himself

heard. Not only so, but to be seen also, for Paul says, "*Last of all He was seen of me*" (I Cor. 15:8). Then He re-ascended to Heaven again. One other night He came back to visit Paul, saying to His Apostle, "*Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome*", then to re-ascend into Heaven. "Twice," says Stanton, "His human spirit made the journey without the body, and five times in the resurrection body He crossed that interstellar space."

He had no wings; He moved through it at will. Hence, I reason,

Our course will be directed by our wills, not by wings. The angels painted on canvass and carved out of stone all have wings. Not many of the angels in the Bible are so described. The cherubim had wings, and they are supposed to be types of creatures who are interested with Christ in Heaven, and who, in a way, control with Him the entire Heavenly host. But the seraphim even, who flew so swiftly, is not described as having wings; and the angels who came to earth did not have wings, else they could not so easily have been mistaken for men, and Jesus in His resurrection body had no wings, and we will have no wings, for we are to be like Him. The Psalmist says, "*Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest*". But the will in the resurrection body will direct instead of wings.

One of my favorite dreams is that of flying. I say "favorite"; I mean "most accustomed". Thousands of miles have I traveled through space simply willing it, always waking with surprise that it is

not so. Dr. George C. Lorimer says, "There are far North men who hold to an old opinion which has become a veritable belief with them, that if one take the raw hide of an otter and bind it about his feet, lift it to his knees, and bind them together, three times round his waist, passing it over the heart and twice about the neck, twice over the eyes, then tie a knot at the base of the brain, when the darkness falls, he can rise and go whither he will. It is a superstition, yet it may be a suggestion of the time when the men who are bound—slaves of Jesus Christ, shall find that the very bands that held them have taken on transporting power and they cannot only pass from earth to Heaven, but from continent to continent, exploring in the eternity ahead, every sun and star and world of God's great Universe, at will."

This is not only the plain hint of Scripture; it is equally the plain suggestion of science. The mind even now, with all of its physical limitations, has the ability to flit from continent to continent, fixing its thought where it pleases. I am now in Minneapolis, in a second in New York, a second more in London, a second more in Constantinople, a second more in Pekin, in Sendai, and San Francisco—around the world. And, after all, the mind is a far more important part of a man than is his physical body. If the greater is subject to the will, the lesser can surely so become, and who can tell what journeys the future will know for the children of God? John Ruskin, the man known as a master of art, and yet whose mastery had more to do with an art of thought and language than with the art of canvass and marble, in his "Stones of

Venice", gives this beautiful description of the migratory storks and swallows coming from the North African coast, across the Mediterranean to the shores of Europe, and portrays what lies before them as they "lean upon the Sirocco wind". Horace Stanton says, "The language with which he pictures their steady course, and the panorama developing before them might with equal propriety be used to depict the experiences of these celestial intelligences of which we have been speaking. Let us for a moment try to raise ourselves even above the level of their flight, and imagine the Mediterranean lying beneath us like an irregular lake, and all its ancient promontories sleeping in the sun; here and there an angry spot of thunder, a grey stain of storm, moving upon the burning field; and here and there a fixed wreath of white volcano smoke, surrounded by its circle of ashes; but for the most part a great peacefulness of light; Syria and Greece, Italy and Spain, laid like pieces of golden pavement into the sea-blue, chased, as we stoop nearer to them, with bossy beaten work of mountain chains, and glowing softly with terraced gardens, and flowers heavy with frankincense, mixed among masses of laurel, and orange and plummy palm, that abate with their grey-green shadows the burning of the marble rocks, and of the ledges of porphyry sloping under lucent sand. Then let us pass farther towards the North, until we see the Orient colors change gradually into a vast belt of rainy green, where the pastures of Switzerland, and poplar valleys of France, and dark forests of the Danube and Carpathians stretch from the mouths of the Loire to those of the Volga,

seen through clefts in grey swirls of rain-cloud and flaky veils of the mist of the brooks, spreading low along the pasture lands; and then, farther North still, to see the earth heave into mighty masses of leaden rock and heathy moor, bordering with a broad waste of gloomy purple that belt of field and wood, and splintering into irregular and grisly islands amidst the northern seas, beaten by storm and chilled by ice-drift, and tormented by furious pulses of contending tide, until the roots of the last forests fail from among the hill ravines, and the hunger of the North wind bites their beaks into barrenness; and, at last, the wall of ice, durable like iron, sets, deathlike, its white teeth against us out of the polar twilight."

A few words on

OUR CELESTIAL FLIGHT

and I shall finish.

The first journey will be into the heavens. "*The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*". It is perhaps the first Heaven, not the third. It is the Heaven of the temporary residence, not our Eternal Home. It is the Heaven where we shall celebrate with Jesus the nuptial ceremony; not the Celestial City in which we shall abide with Him forever. For you will remember that that Heavenly City into which Christ ascended is spoken of as being "*up far above all heavens*" (*Eph. 4:10*). From it He will descend into the first Heaven and call us forth to meet Him there. It is the trysting place of the Divine Lover and His betrothed. Hen-

ry Alford must have been thinking of it when he wrote:

"Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steeps of light;
'Tis finished, all is finished,
Their fight with death and sin;
Fling open wide the golden gates,
And let the victors in.

"What rush of hallelujahs
Fills all the earth and sky!
What ringing of a thousand harps
Bespeaks the triumph nigh!
O day, for which creation
And all its tribes were made!
O joy, for all its former woes
A thousand-fold repaid!

"O then, what raptured greetings
On Canaan's happy shore!
What knitting severed friendships up,
Where partings are no more!
Then eyes with joy shall sparkle,
That brimmed with tears of late,
Orphans no longer fatherless,
Nor widows desolate."

Our second journey will be back to the earth. Christ is coming down from this celebration to occupy His throne in Jerusalem and rule "*from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth*". And His saints are to reign with Him. A thousand years we shall spend upon the earth but not for one moment shall we be bound to it. In that day "*they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint*". Or, as the great A. J. Gordon said, "Celestial flight and ter-

restial travel shall be known at pleasure, and we shall weary in neither."

I am glad there is to be a thousand years upon the earth before we go Home to Heaven to abide for evermore. When one of the greatest souls England ever knew was approaching death, someone asked him if he were ready to go. He answered, "Yes, so far as having made my peace with God is concerned; but I cannot bear to go from the world and leave so much sin in it." What a benediction to think that we shall be permitted to linger about it until sin shall be no more, until every scar on its beautiful face shall have been moved and every desert shall have been made to blossom as the rose. If a man takes pleasure in tearing out the deficient parts of his old home and putting in new, until it stands in completion, what joy God's men and women ought to have in seeing a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, the physical beauty of which shall comport with its moral character; and such is not only the prospect but the sure prophecy of God's Word; for did not Isaiah, the Evangel of long ago, tell us that we shall *"Go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off"* (Is. 55:12, 13). Oh glorious Millennium when the meek shall inherit the earth!

"There is a Land mine eye hath seen
In visions of enraptured thought,
So bright, that all that spreads between
Is with its radiant glory fraught.

"A Land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow, falls no stain;
There those who meet shall part no more,
And those long parted meet again."

Yet all of this is only a foretaste of that Heaven which shall be our eventual residence when Christ shall have turned over the key to God the Father, and God Himself, who is Love, shall become all in all.

Then the universe will be our inheritance, and the will of God our blessed work and unbroken joy, our eternal portion. Someone has said that "sailors feel the influence of the fresh waters of the Amazon long before they enter that noble river, and we are told that when the nations, the Huns and Goths, had once tasted the delicious wines of Italy they could not rest satisfied till they were in that sunny land. Before Israel crossed the Jordan they had grapes of Eschol and the testimony of those who had viewed the land. Lo, too, the believer has a foretaste of Heaven and his soul is fired with a resolve to go up and possess the land in the strength of his God."

How are you living, man? Lift your eyes from the earth; cease from the muck-rake business; begin here to search and do the will of God, that you may go there to enjoy Him for ever!

CHAPTER XII.

PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND APPEARANCE

PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND APPEARANCE

I Thessalonians 5:1-20.

IN concluding this study, from I Thessalonians, Paul logically follows his affirmations concerning the Return, the Resurrection and the Rapture, by a practical appeal. And that appeal may be considered under the suggestions, Anticipate the Appearance, Prepare for the Appearance, and Proceed under the Spirit.

ANTICIPATE THE APPEARANCE

It will be sudden and unexpected!

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape".

Everywhere in Scripture the Second Advent is prophesied as an event that will be sudden and unexpected. Jesus Himself confirms the idea, employing the identical figure here used by the Apostle Paul, namely, that of the thief who steals in unexpectedly at night; and He concludes, *"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh"* (Matt. 24:44). Again in His parable of the wise and foolish virgins, after having recited how, while the foolish virgins went to buy oil, the bridegroom came, and *"they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut"*, so that afterward when the others came,

he answered, "I know you not", He concluded, "*Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh*" (Matt. 25:13).

Dr. W. L. Pettingill, formerly of the Philadelphia School of the Bible, tells how a friend came to him with three questions. First, "Do you believe that Christ will come in six days?" Dr. Pettingill said, "I do not know when Christ will come! That is a secret God has been pleased to reserve as His own." The friend answered, "I know you do not know. I am not asking you what you know, but what you think? Do you expect that Christ will be here in six days, honestly, candidly?" Dr. Pettingill answered, "I see what you mean and I want to be perfectly honest and say that I doubt if He will; I think it probable that, in six days, things will continue as they are and that the earth-rulers will still be in places of power."

"What about six months?"

"Well, if you want to know what I think, I think probably in six months things will still continue as they are."

"Well then, what about six years?"

"To be honest, I think this age may not close in six years, but that things may continue much as they are now."

Thereat the friend remarked, "That is it; you brethren don't believe what you teach." To which Dr. Pettingill instantly answered, "Whether we do or not, does not adversely effect the Truth; in fact, it tends to confirm it."

"How so?" was the question.

"That is exactly what Jesus says, '*In such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh*'."

This subject is not one to sleep over.

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

"For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night" (vss. 4-7).

There are a great many questions and problems concerning which men are wont to say, "I would like to sleep over them!" Only yesterday I had a financial problem presented to me over long distance 'phone, and I said to the gentleman making it, "Let me sleep over that and I will answer in two or three days. Let me take time to think it over, and by sleep that will refresh and clarify the mind, I will be the better able to clearly judge the matter."

But there are some subjects concerning which a man is not to sleep. There is a story told that seems to be likely, to the effect that a motorist, driving down the Pacific coast, thirty or forty miles north of Los Angeles, at three o'clock in the morning, passed a young man afoot. He was neatly dressed and in the light of the car, looked like a gentleman, and the motorist slowed down and waiting until the young man came along side, said, "Where are you going?"

"To Los Angeles," was the answer.

"Could I give you a lift?"

"No, thank you," was the reply.

"Why, man; it is more than thirty miles to Los Angeles. It will take you many hours to walk it. You are welcome to a seat in my car!"

"Thank you," said the young man, "I have a reason for walking. I am engaging in a practice of keeping myself awake. I have an experience ahead of me that will require many hours of wakeful watching, an experience that will test my ability to the utmost, and I am in practice for the same!"

The motorist was immediately interested and said, "What is your name?"

The young man answered, "My name is Charles Lindberg."

A few days later the motorist learned that Lindberg was training himself for the trans-Atlantic flight, on the many hours and thousands of miles of which he dared not sleep for a moment.

So on the subject of the Second Coming, the children of light are not to sleep, as do others, but to watch and be sober.

"My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies."

Our very salvation is at stake.

"Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

"Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (vss. 8-10).

We are not here affirming that the pre-millennarian position is essential to salvation, any more than we would affirm that a sound Scripture view of the Atonement was essential to salvation. But we are declaring that salvation is of the Lord, and that Christ, and Christ alone, is the Author of the same. And the only Christ who can save is the

Christ of the Bible; an imaginary Christ can produce only imaginary effects. The real historical Christ is the Redeemer, if redemption is possible. He is the Christ of Old Testament prophecy; He is the Christ born of the Virgin Mary; He is the Christ who wrought the miracles recorded to His credit; He is the Christ who died on Calvary's tree, a substitute for sin; He is the Christ who was buried in Joseph's new tomb but who on the third day rose again; He is the Christ who ascended into Heaven; and He is the Christ who said, "I will come again".

There are people who imagine that they can eviserate the Gospel and retain Christianity; that they can deny Divine revelation and yet have left them a way of salvation.

Such philosophies are not only false; they are foolish. God hath appointed salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we shall live together with Him. And *"there is none other name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"*. The coming Christ is not only the Redeemer of the individual but the only hope of a wicked world.

PREPARE FOR HIS APPEARANCE

Employ time in mutual edification.

"Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do".

Christianity is something new under the sun. Until nineteen hundred years ago nothing akin to the same had ever been seen in the earth; and since that time it has had no competitor. It is a novel fraternity, a fraternity that rests not upon

wealth, station, honorable birth, or any of the mere accidents of life; it rests in the spirit rather, an indwelling Christ makes men brethren and tends to abolish our paper walls of partition. In Christ there is neither rich nor poor, high nor low, Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. In Him men are made one. It is the only order on earth that can live on that basis. Secret societies sometimes boast their equality with the Church of God, but there is no secret society in existence that could be continued indefinitely and yet utterly repudiate the paper walls of partition put up by man that separates the high from the humble, the rich from the poor, the learned from the ignorant, the men of high birth from the peasant. Such an endeavor would perish in swaddling clothes.

The highest level that has been reached by such orders or organizations, or can be reached, is not a whit above that of mutual insurance societies. It must exist upon a basis of mutual admiration or mutual insurance, or on no basis at all; and they must give promise of some intellectual or social advantage if they are to receive patronage. The Church of God, the Body of Christ and the Body in Christ, exists upon a wholly different basis and is animated by altogether another principle, namely, a fraternity born of a common experience with Christ. The experience of the soul's salvation and its objective is not selfish but unselfish; it is not to get something, but to give. The only institution in existence that sends thousands and millions to people who have never been seen by it, and asks and expects no social, political, financial, or personal return, are the brethren in Christ.

They give to East Indians that they know not; to Africans upon whose faces they will never look; to Chinamen with whom they have no acquaintance, and ask nothing in return, save the salvation of the recipient and the honor of Christ. And they are members of the Body which takes in the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the ignorant and the educated, and yet not only exists but marks progress until today it is the mightiest institution on the face of the earth. Mutual edification therefore, is a holy calling.

In this institution leaders are held in esteem.

"We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

"And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake".

.. Judaism and Christianity, the religions of revelation, have not only been characterized by outstanding leadership, but blessed under the guidance of the same. It was Moses who took a couple of million of slaves and so directed their destinies as to make of them a conquering nation. It was David who assembled in the wilderness the distressed and discouraged and needy, the social outcasts of the hour, and out of that company formed a kingdom of first importance. That leadership is the Divine method is abundantly illustrated in the Fourth Book of Moses, Numbers, where a marvelous organization was effected and where men were set over the great companies that constituted the same. Of the tribe of Reuben, Eleazar was the leader over 46,500; of the tribe of Simeon, Shelumiel was the leader over 59,300; of the tribe of

Judah, Nahshon was the leader over 74,600; of the tribe of Issachar, Nethaneel was the leader over 44,400; of the tribe of Zebulun, Eliab was the leader over 57,400; of the tribe of Joseph, and of Ephraim, Elishama was the leader over 40,500; of the tribe of Manasseh, Kamaliel was the leader over 32,200; of the tribe of Benjamin, Abidan was the leader over 35,400; of the tribe of Dan, Ahiezer was the leader over 62,700; of the tribe of Asher, Pagiel was the leader over 62,700; of the tribe of Gad, Elisaph was the leader over 45,650; of the tribe of Naphtali, Ahira was the leader over 53,400.

It will be remembered that this appointment-effect in the history of Israel was not forgotten, for when we come to the end of the Divine Revelation, the Eternal City itself is described as having "*a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel*"; while the leadership of the New Testament is also celebrated in the same City for "*the wall of the City had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb*".

What marvelous honor God puts upon leadership and what unspeakable blessing has attended the same in the progress of the Church. Leadership accounts for success in every local body; and in proportion as the great Christian movements themselves come to victory, the explanation is found in Spirit-led leadership.

Again, **Seemly conduct should characterize the Christian's behavior.**

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are un-

ruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men".

As we have emphasized in the previous discourse, the world, as such, does not read the Word of God. Its knowledge, therefore, of Christ comes through Christians. We are epistles known and read of them, and a Godly walk and conversation is the most effective Christian testimony.

It is related that the Duke of Wellington, observing a British officer standing in a slouchy manner, asked, "Why do you stand in such an unbecoming attitude?" "Why not, Sir? I am not on duty!" To this the Iron Duke replied, "A British officer is never off duty. Resume your military standing." It is a principle that applies to the professed Christian. We are under constant observation and the world will take its view of Him whom we profess to serve from our attitude and walk.

Finally, and in further study of this chapter

PROCEED UNDER THE SPIRIT

The closing verses of this chapter have four or five expressions of such procedure.

Serve the Lord with gladness.

"Rejoice evermore" (vs. 16).

The cause of Christ often suffers from the lugubrious face and dyspeptic spirit of its professor. The one man who has the best right to be happy, even under adverse and most unfavorable conditions, is the Christian. In fact, it is doubtful if there are any circumstances under which he is justified in losing his joy. It is his privilege not

only to be good but to be cheerful; not only to seek a holy life but to live a happy one.

Ward Beecher said: "Of all the lights which you kindle in the face, joy will reach farthest out to sea, where troubled mariners are seeking the shore. Even in your deepest griefs, rejoice in God. As waves phosphoresce, let joys flash from the swing of the sorrows of your soul."

People often complain that they would be happy if conditions were better. But as a matter of fact, joy is not the outcome of outward circumstances but of the inner spirit. In proof of that, take the instance of John Bradford of Newgate. The day before he was to be burned in Smithfield, he swung himself on the bedpost in veritable glee, saying, "Tomorrow is my wedding day." Addressing one of his comrades in martyrdom, he further said, "Fine shining we will make tomorrow when the flame is kindled." And when they led him out he went to his martyr's crown laughing on the way. Charles Spurgeon, referring to that fact, said, "Was Bradford mad? Ah, no, but he had the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

Pray without ceasing.

"Pray without ceasing" (vs. 7).

One may say, "We can't; we are too busy!" But prayer is not the occupation of the hands; it is not the engagement of the feet; it is not even the wagging of the tongue. We are all free to follow whatever vocations demand our energies, for "prayer is the soul's sincere desire" and is consonant with any occupation and can be carried on while at the same.

There is a remarkable story told of James Gil-

mour, the pioneer missionary to Mongolia, that he never used a blotter in writing, preferring to take the time requiring the drying of the ink for prayer. But even that arrangement was not at all essential to the continuance of his petition; he could have prayed while he wrote. E. M. Bounds, in perhaps the best book on prayer that has yet been written, tells us a better way. Stonewall Jackson was a man of prayer, and Jackson declared, "I have so fixed the habit of prayer in my mind that I never raise a glass of water to my lips without asking God's blessing; never seal a letter without putting a word of prayer under the seal; never take a letter from the post without a brief sending of my thoughts Heavenward; never change my classes in the lecture room without a moment's petition for the cadets who go out and for those who come in. *"Pray without ceasing"*.

"A throne of grace! then let us go
And offer up our prayer;
A gracious God will mercy show
To all that worship there.

"A throne of grace! O at that throne
Our knees have often bent,
And God has showered His blessings down
As often as we went.

"A throne of grace! rejoice, ye saints;
That throne is open still;
To God unbosom your complaints,
And then inquire His will.

"A throne of grace, we yet shall need
Long as we draw our breath;
A Saviour, too, to intercede,
Till we are changed by death."

In everything give thanks.

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (vs. 18).

Here also is a need for Christian grace, the grace of thanksgiving. Like prayer, it should exist under all circumstances, and even flourish in the atmosphere of adversity. Few people know the history of our thanksgiving day. Dr. Franklin tells us the origin of that day. It was a time of great despondency among the first settlers of New England. A long drought had produced the failure of crops and a solemn assembly was called for a day of fasting and prayer. One after another had related the hardships of the new life and had deplored the destructive drought. Finally an old farmer rose and spoke feelingly of how they had provoked Heaven with their complaints, and reviewed the mercies they had already enjoyed. He reminded them that they had not been as grateful as they should have been for the evidences of Divine favor; and finally moved that instead of appointing a day of fasting they should appoint a day of thanksgiving. This was done and it is claimed that our thanksgiving service is a continuation of that appointment.

The man with whom the feeling of thanksgiving is will find a thousand occasions for the expression of the same.

"Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live;
To love and serve Thee is my share,
And this Thy grace must give.

"If life be long, I will be glad
That I may long obey;
If short, yet why should I be sad
To soar to endless day?

"Christ leads me through no darker rooms
Than He went through before;

No one into His Kingdom comes,
But through His opened door.

"Come, Lord, when grace has made me meet
Thy blessed face to see;
For if Thy work on earth be sweet,
What will Thy glory be?"

Finally, **Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (vs. 21).

The Apostle tells us that to this we must "*abstain from all appearance of evil*". But, knowing our inability, he reminds us that "*the very God of peace*" can "*sanctify you wholly*" and prays to God that the "*whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*". And then, to further uplift, he says, "*Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it*".

The conclusion of this chapter involves a Greeting, a Charge, and a Prayer, and ends with a splendid Amen.

First Thessalonians is one of the finest appeals, of even sacred Writ itself, to high and holy living—a clear and elaborate presentation of man's obligation in view of Divine grace. Perhaps we could not finish this discourse in any finer way than to say that Christ looks to His disciples as the agents of His Gospel, yea, as the embodiment of the same, and their deportment will determine the progress of the Church.

It is said that in the days of Tiberius it was counted a crime to carry a ring stamped with the name of Augustus to any mean or sordid place where it might be polluted. Our course of conduct and companionships of life prove our loyalty to our Lord.

CHAPTER XIII.

**SOBRIETY—GIVING WIDE BERTH TO
SALOONS**

"Let us watch and be sober" (I Thess. 5:5).

SOBRIETY—GIVING WIDE BERTH TO SALOONS

I Thessalonians 5:5.

Sermon preached to men only.

I AM to speak to you this afternoon on the subject of "Sobriety", an essential to any success. You will consent that it is one of the most important to every man. Whether you are a total abstainer, a tippler, or intemperate, you know the wisdom of this counsel, *"Let us watch and be sober"*.

There was an old preacher who used to introduce the marriage sermon with these words, "John, matrimony is a blessing to a few, a curse to many, and an uncertainty to all."

Seeing that truth, we ought to stand upon the platform which declares that total abstinence is a blessing to thousands, a curse to nobody and good for everybody.

*"Therefore, * * let us watch and be sober"*. That heathen philosopher was wise who fashioned a goblet which he represented as filled with ruby wine. At its bottom he fixed a serpent coiled for a spring, a pair of gleaming eyes in its head, its mouth open, its fangs raised to strike, to be seen only when one had quaffed off the cup and had come down to the dregs; then, that dreadful head rose up, and those fangs were ready for their work.

Solomon furnished the very suggestion from which such a conception might have come to the artist when he said, *"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder"*. And Sol-

omon's words are solemnly true. "*Let us watch and be sober*".

SOBRIETY IS ESSENTIAL TO FINANCIAL SUCCESS

The reason why so many men fail is simply this, they do not let drink alone.

The secret of poverty in this country is not the stringency of the times, it is the accursed alcohol. Enough money is put into that every year to give not only the comforts, but the luxuries to every poverty-stricken family in the land. Our whiskey bill in America, under the saloon, ran into billions of dollars, and the tobacco bill, hundreds of millions, annually.

The major part of those bills is paid by the poor of the land, and very much of it by day laborers who, in the sweat of their brow, secure their beer. The tipplers and smokers and chewers put more into these unclean habits than the whole American family pays for bread and meat and woolen goods, and cotton goods, and boots and shoes, and sugar, and molasses and public education, and Christian missions combined; and yet we say, "The times are hard—this stringency is awful!" No! No! This drink business is the devil's provision for poverty. The aforetime saloon was the secret of suffering. Not once in twelve months do I have a man, who lets the liquor alone, ask me for assistance. Scarce a day passes over my head but some patron of this hellish custom puts in at my study and makes a pitiful plea for board and lodging. Ah, truly of such Haggai wrote, when he said, "*Now therefore; * * Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and*

bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes”.

Down in the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts, years ago, they voted a local option which you know is local prohibition. The year before this was brought into effect, the total deposits in the savings banks of that city were \$140,000; the first year after it went into effect the total deposits were \$586,000. You see the secret of financial success. *“Therefore, * * let us watch and be sober”.*

Business has no place today for the drinking man; society is coming less and less to receive him, and, in truth, if you propose to drink, there is no place for you. Your future is a failure. Your financial status is settled already, and it is determined not so much by whether you drink yourself blind. The simple question is whether you drink at all. Tippling is the devil’s doctrine of temperance; what the Apostle means here is total abstinence, and you know that is essential to the greatest financial success.

SOBRIETY IS ESSENTIAL TO PHYSICAL STRENGTH

There is such a thing as being stimulated into greater strength by the intoxicating cup, but the reaction follows; and by that very drink a greater weakness is fastening itself upon the flesh. When the saloon was here, one fifth of the men that you met were bloated. What did that mean? That a combustion was taking place in their flesh and, as a physician said to me, a little while ago, of a man who died of a liquor-liver, “He was burned out.”

Did you ever notice what Solomon said on this point? Referring to those that drink, that wise man wrote, "*thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not*".

I guess most of you have been to sea, and know what seasickness is—all strength gone, stomach upside down; what brains you have left in a whirl, and every fibre of your flesh filled with nausea.

I remember a story I heard of two men who were going to England together. They had had a rough passage. The old vessel had tossed and plowed until she came near to the farther shore. One of them was able to walk a bit and, looking out, he saw what seemed to be the lights of an English port, so he said to his sick companion, "Jack, can't you just get up here and look out? I think I see the lights," to which his friend replied, "Ugh! they're coming next."

And when I pass the streets and see men that are so bowled up that they have to hang over a railing somewhere and let the very sickness empty them of alcohol, I am reminded of what Solomon said, "*Thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast*".

My father-in-law told me a story of one of these who had thrown up everything but his heels and was wiping his eyes when he looked down and saw among other things a poodle dog, who had suddenly appeared on the scene, and he said, "I know where I got the crackers; I know where I got the beer, and I know where I got the sausages, but blamed if I know where I got that dog."

Some of those who drink see worse sights than that by as much as serpents are worse than curs.

But all this is only temporal sickness, the sort that passes away in a day or two. But the man who gives himself to the wine cup will soon find that chronic diseases are settling themselves upon him, and that he is really disabled.

Some years ago, I was in the country, and when dinner time came on, we stopped at a farm-house and asked if we could get a lunch there, and they pointed down a little distance and said, "That is a hotel," and we went. The reception room to this country hotel was a saloon, and, as the stove was located in that, we went in and sat down to warm. While there, three-men, farmers from round about, came for beer, bloated, every one of them; blasted in body; as weakened at forty as men ought to be at seventy-five; strength gone and death drawing on. They were foolish enough to forget that in this country the saloon was then slaying 60,000 to 70,000 a year, and that they were set for destruction. How soon that came no man can tell. If they were moderate, the dying process was the slower, none the less sure. If immoderate, a short period finished the work.

One of the most beautiful men I have ever known, dear to me as a brother, a man who, at the age of thirty was beginning to have a national reputation, died at thirty-two because, in the sprees to which he was subject, he drank one day too much and lay insensible for 72 hours when life went out. "*At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder*", and the adder's sting is physical destruction.

SOBRIETY IS ESSENTIAL TO MENTAL BALANCE

And I am almost disposed to say that mental balance is essential to sobriety, for certainly the man who is fool enough to be intemperate must have some weakness of mind.

You remember the story of the tipsy old Scotchman to whom a friend said one day, "Man James, I am sorry to see you taking to the cup to rob you of your sense." The Scotchman answered with a hiccough, "You make a big mistake. It is nae the drink that takes away the sense! Nae, nae; a mon's sense hae gone before he takes the drink!" But it is absolutely certain that if he is sane before he takes the drink, he cannot remain as sane, when he fails to be sober.

There are men upon whom rest heavy mental strain, that are brought by the devil to imagine that drink brightens their minds. They have a case to plead in court, a political speech to make, some document to write, upon which a vast deal depends; and, not satisfied with what mental power God has provided, they seek to increase their stock by a stimulant. It works well and the devil tells them that they cannot afford to do without it. A second time it succeeds, and a third, and a fourth, and a fortieth, but every time a reaction has come. The tone of the mind has been lowered, and the stimulant is the more a necessity until by and by it takes a quart to arouse the laggard brain; and, even then, the aroused brain is but a poor instrument of thought, for it has been burned out. How long shall Satan work this deception upon man? Are we not able to see in the rags about us what

comes of it, and do not the sober men who think longest and think to best effect, who prove to be the only brilliant men of the land, teach us nothing?

Perhaps no man in this country has done such severe thinking, with as little sleep, and with such prodigious results as Thomas A. Edison, the inventor.

Years since Frances Willard asked Edison if he were a total abstainer, and when he replied in the affirmative, she inquired, "What made you so? Was it home influence?" To which Edison made answer in his blunt way, "No, madam, it was because I always felt I had better use for my brains."

In 1859 when that noblest candidate for president, Mr. Lincoln, was campaigning at Leavenworth, Kansas, a reception was given in his honor, but was disgraced by the wine cup. The abolitionist declined to taste in spite of the persuasions of his host, and the example of his associates. The next morning, when about to leave, the great man took the hand of young Captain Fitch tenderly into his own, and looking eagerly into his eyes, said, "My young friend; I noticed you tasted the cup yesterday. Don't put an enemy into your mouth to steal away your brains."

Years ago in Minneapolis, at the Young Men's Democratic Club, punch was served. When Mr. Bryan sat down and saw his wine glass, not waiting for it to be filled with any sort of drink, he deliberately turned it upside down. Doubtless he knew that he had better use for his brains, and I do not believe that he could have made as many speeches and as brilliant ones, as he delivered in

his great public ministry, had he been accustomed to touch, even, the intoxicating cup.

At a public dinner given to General Harrison, when he was a candidate for the office of president, one of the guests drank to his health. The General pledged his toast by drinking water. Another gentleman was indiscreet enough to say, at the conclusion of his toast, "General Harrison, will you favor me by drinking a glass of wine?" to which that noble man answered in a most kindly way, "I beg to be excused." But a chorus of voices urged him to join in a glass of wine. Then he rose from his seat and said in a most dignified manner, but with much feeling, "I have twice refused to drink the wine cup; though you press the matter ever so much, I will not drink. I made a resolve when I started in life that I would avoid it. That vow I have never broken. I am one in a class of 17 young men who graduated in college together. Sixteen already fill drunkard's graves. I owe my health, my happiness and my prosperity to the resolution I have made and kept. It is useless for you to urge me now to take to the intoxicating cup."

He understood what every man ought to see, that sobriety is essential to mental balance.

IT IS ALSO ESSENTIAL TO MORAL CLEANLINESS

You know that the fact of the stimulant in the intoxicating cup is lust of thought, if not lechery in act. When, with certain gentlemen elsewhere referred to, I went through the slums of the city of Chicago, I was impressed with the means employed

by fallen women to secure associates in sin. The first request made was, "Let us drink." They understood, as you know, that the man who is stimulated by liquor is no longer master of himself, but a subject for the seduction of those whose sins are scarlet. A few years ago you could go into any city of this country and see the alliances between the saloon and the houses of scarlet women. In Chicago, in half the cases, they were in the same building; saloon on the first floor, brothels on the floors above, or in the building at the side connected by doors. Some of you are praying to be delivered from the sins of lust. Your prayers are folly unless you first have the mastery at the point of strong drink; and that means that you shall let Jesus Christ save you from the sin that suggests both.

SOBRIETY IS ESSENTIAL TO DOMESTIC HAPPINESS

One of the first blots of drinking moderately, or to excess, is seen in degenerate children. Dr. Henderson, in his book, "The Social Spirit in America", has quoted from one of the most thorough and impartial students of sociology these words, "The poisonous drinks and drugs, which are consumed by modern people, destroy vitality, arouse and stimulate selfish passions, loose dangerous beasts that make their lair in every human being, and turn home into purgatory. From such degenerate descendants come those who, if they remain exposed to the same influences, rapidly descend to the lowest degrees of degeneracy, dwarfishness, and idiocy."

I think the saddest result I have ever seen from an intemperate life was an insane child. The bloat of the father's body was in the functional structure of the daughter's brain, and when I saw her last she was raving mad.

Pauperism, the result of strong drink, renders domestic happiness impossible. How can a home be happy, when the mother is pinched and starved, the children hungry and cold?

I went, one day, into a home in Chicago where there lay a sick wife and a dead baby, and the disconsolate woman said to me, as I talked to her, "This child could have lived had not my husband been drunk when it was born. But his abuse of me in the hour of labor effected its death, and as I look upon its cold, white face, I wish that I might be at peace with it."

Good woman she was; but her poverty, her stricken house, her disturbed mind, her sick body, all her unhappy surroundings came as an offering from the neighboring saloon, and I said to myself, "It were better to sleep in death."

It seems to me that men who drink and know the distress of home experience in such results, might learn something from the story of him of whom I read a while ago. He was accustomed to drink and on one occasion went away with a number of his associates to fish, and of course they loaded their wagon with many kinds of kegs and bottles. After the first day or two this fellow was unconscious, so drunk that he understood nothing, and his associates thought it would be a good joke to hitch up the wagon and drive to town and let

him come to himself, and see that he was alone, and after a little counsel they set about it.

The wife heard of their return and knew that her husband had not come with them, so she set out to find him, if possible. At the break of the morn she sat beside the stupid man she had sworn to love. When he opened his eyes he was astonished at her presence and said, "Wife, where am I? How came you here?" She told him. "How long have I been drunk?" "Two or three days." "I am thirsty, will you bring me a drink?" She took an old cup and went to a spring hard by and brought some sparkling water. When he had quaffed it, he passed it back and said, "Wife, I drank your tears then. I saw them fall into the water as you held it there; and I have been drinking your tears for a long time, and by what little manhood is left, and by the grace of that God who has promised to help, I will drink your tears no more while I live." He was true to his pledge, and that house which had been a hell was in twelve months like a little Heaven.

Is it not time that some of you ceased drinking the tears of your wives, your children, your firmest friends?

SOBRIETY IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SALVATION OF THE SOUL

Mr. Moody said, "There are men who are selling out Heaven for strong drink." Of course they are, for men who drink at all are doing so at the expense of their souls, and the Scriptures were never more explicit upon any point than this. The drunkard shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. If

you propose to have your cups, you cannot keep your character. If you propose to remain with your strong drinks, you lose your soul. You understand that, and you need not be excusing yourself by saying, "We are not drunkards as yet. We are temperate," for has it never occurred to you that the drinking of the temperate man is much more a sin in God's sight than the drinking of a drunkard. The temperate man professes to be able to control himself, the drunkard has lost self-control. He cannot quit if he will, and God may pity him, but how can we expect a sympathy from God when we deliberately do that which we could easily let alone.

One day a man entered a barroom of a village tavern and asked for drink. "No," said the barkeeper, "you have had delirium tremens once, and I cannot sell you any." Instantly two young men took his place and the barkeeper poured out the accursed cup. Then the first, flushed with the indignation he felt, faced the landlord, said, "Do not that devil's work. Six years ago at the age of these fellows, I stood where they now are. I was but 22 years old then, but never youth had fairer prospects. Now at 28 I am a wreck, bloated in body, unbalanced in mind, and destroyed in soul. In this room I formed the habit that has wrought this ruin. Oh, sell me a few glasses more and let me finish the work and be gone! For me there is no hope, so to sell me liquor is not so much of a sin, but these young men can be saved, and you have no right to destroy them. I plead with you, in God's Name, that you do not that which will cost

them their soul and bring you to further condemnation by the righteous Judge!"

Yes, sir, I think it would be unquestionably a greater sin for me to drink than for the worst drunkard in this town; for I can control myself, and I would be a fool as well as a vicious sinner in God's sight to accept Satan's suggestion, when I am strong enough to withstand it. And so I say to you, this afternoon, unless you are willing to lose your soul, you must give wide berth to saloons! And I say unto you this afternoon, if you will, you can be saved, whether you are degraded by drink, or just beginning to yield to that devilish temptation. Christ is able. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"*.

One Sunday night in the service here a man stood up, who was a physical, mental and spiritual wreck, and he said to God's people, "Pray for me." He had the courage of his convictions and remained for further conversation and prayer. That night he was saved. Two weeks later he came back and gave his testimony to the glory of God, four weeks after his family returned to him and this afternoon he is present, a man of honorable employment. His mind is coming back to its perfect poise, his body is recovering the bloat, and his soul is safe for time, and hopes in the promise of eternity.

One Christmas night in the Union Mission, I went down and spoke to a man half drunk. Rum had reduced his clothing to rags. The bottle had bloated his body. Strong drink had largely destroyed his moral sensibilities, and though he was but half sober, I said, "If you will, Christ can save

tonight." He answered, "I will." A week later on a Sunday afternoon, when the sermon was finished, I went to my room, and who should I see but that same man, but so transformed that I scarcely knew him, and he said, "By the grace of God, Mr. Riley, I have not even desired to drink since that Saturday night, and though I have not steady employment, I have been able every day since to make an honest living." Oh, young man, just commencing this evil course, won't you come to Christ this afternoon and cease from it for ever? Oh, men degraded by drink, out of whose hearts every hope is well-nigh destroyed; men who cannot so much as lift themselves up to seek the Son of God, won't you listen to the Gospel and learn that the Son of Man is come to seek and to save you. And your part is what Peter did when perishing, simply to say, "Lord, save me!" He will respond, and this Sunday afternoon shall be a happy day, a day to be for ever remembered as the blessed one when you were born again, and born from above.

When the steamer, "Central America", went down in New York, the greatest excitement reigned in that city. Many were drowned, some few were hanging to floating spars, and the life-saving vessels were out in search.

A second day after she sank, one of these life-savers was seen coming to shore, and the eager watchers waited until the captain stood in the bowsprit and shouted, "Three men saved." That is not the message I want to go up to Heaven this afternoon to be repeated in the celestial streets. This is the message I want the Heavenly host to hear, "Fifty more saved; a hundred," if there be

present so many, who know not the salvation of the Son of God.

CHAPTER XIV.

CRIME AND THE KU KLUX KLAN

CRIME AND THE KU KLUX KLAN

I Thessalonians 5:21-23.

Preached in the State Theater, Minneapolis, in 1924 when the Ku Klux Klan was at its height.

WE have secured this theater for three consecutive mornings in order to present to the public three burning questions: first, "Is the Theory of Evolution to be Longer Tolerated in our State Schools" (See "Inspiration or Evolution", page 113); second, "Shall We join a Ku Klux Klan to Abate Crime?" and third, "Does the Rage of Crime Justify the Return to Capital Punishment?" (See Author's Vol. on Romans 13:1-5.)

One might imagine that these were unrelated subjects. On the contrary, they are of closest kin. The theory of evolution, with its cognate ideas, the "struggle for existence" and "the survival of the fittest", is not only bestial in all its claims and godlessly materialistic in its philosophy, but denying as it does all external authority human and Divine, it paves the way for crime, and has already produced the social tragedy of all centuries, the baptism of blood of 1914-1918.

The sudden rise and rapid development of the Ku Klux Klan indicates, to say the least, that there must be abuses of law and order that demand, in the judgment of multitudes, more speedy and adequate attention. The rage of crime characterizing every country in the world and particularly jeopardizing our own commonwealth of Minnesota, compels thought on the question, "Must we return to capital punishment?"

The Bible is the universal Book. There is no subject of human concern to which it does not address itself, and its language is usually both apt and adequate. As applied to the Ku Klux Klan, witness this text: "*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Thess. 5:21-23).

Let us give ourselves to its suggestions.

THE PROOF OF GOOD

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good".

This sentence, like every other one of Scripture, is capable of multiplied applications, but it certainly involves some great principles of thought and conduct. For instance, it opposes easy credulity; it demands careful study; it looks to eventual stability.

It opposes easy credulity. "*Prove all things*". Don't be mentally or morally imposed upon. Don't believe everything you hear. Don't accept as settled everything said to you. Don't conclude that the daily newspaper is infallible or even that public opinion is the voice of God. Practice the text, "*Prove all things*".

This principle has a special application to the subject of the Ku Klux Klan. I am not a secret order man. I belong to two institutions and two only—I belong to my family and am a member of the First Baptist Church of Minneapolis, and in those two relations of life I live and move and have my being. I expect it to so remain. I have no

intention whatever of joining the Ku Klux Klan, and hereby serve notice that my solicitation for membership would be in vain. But I do believe in fair play.

A few months ago I read a series of articles on the Ku Klux Klan, and was led, from that series, to believe that the Klan was practically a criminal organization, brought into being with an attempt, as others put it, to "disrupt national unity; undermine the morals of American youth; destroy patriotism, overthrow the principles of government; encourage disrespect for courts; engage in mob violence, sabotage and every form of lawlessness." My further study of the subject has profoundly impressed me that that was an utterly partisan and prejudiced judgment, animated doubtless by foreign residents in these United States—men whose selfish interests were endangered, whose political aspirations were imperiled, or whose religious prejudices were excited.

I am not yet able to accept the perfectly roseate description of the Klan presented and defended by its Imperial Klokard. As is usual, the truth probably lies somewhere between, and whether one has any intention whatever of uniting with this movement or of joining his fellows for the purpose of putting it out of commission, he is duty bound to know the truth about it, to seek the proof of its virtues and vices, and judge righteously.

Dr. Fowler, a Baptist minister who was in this city a few weeks since, is a member of the Klan, and a man of reputable standing in the Southland. He declares, "The Klansman believes that a dual government is impossible, that no individual or

body of men within the bounds of our government can justly or in any other way take the law into their own hands. A Klansman will not take the life of a traitor or of traitors by mob law. A Klansman cannot violate the law. He is oath bound to support constitutional laws. He will help prosecute and will cause to be prosecuted any man who violates the law, and will cause to be punished any man who is a traitor to his country. The government can depend upon Klansmen." I see the same claim officially put forth by a number of the men who head this movement, and in proof of the fact that such must be the law of the organization, a Texas Klan was recently disfellowshipped and expelled because there seemed to be evidence of its participation in mob violence.

Before I finish this address I shall speak of secrecy charged to the organization and of objections that may be waged against it, but for the present will only repeat, "Know at firsthand."

Such knowledge demands study. Study is more than reading. It involves careful observation and judicious reading, impartial and unprejudiced reading. The great difficulty with modern theology seems to be the fact that its advocates have come to read but one side of a subject. Prof. Leander S. Keyser, of Springfield, Ohio, in his great volume, "Contending for the Faith", shows there is absolutely no evidence in the writings of these men that they ever gave a moment to what is thought and spoken by conservatives. Having deliberately determined to be liberals, they will not impede their progress in rationalism by considering the other side of the question. In this they are at one

with so-called Christian Scientists. Years since I pled with a young woman, a member of my church, to come into a Bible class for six months' study, saying to her, "If at the end of such a study you can go on with Mrs. Eddy, we will offer no objection." To this she answered, "I could not consent to such a thing. That sort of study would confuse my thinking." Doubtless!

There are many men who do not propose to be confused in their thinking. Having accepted their party lines, they do not want to be perturbed, but prefer to believe what they want to believe rather than what is true.

Take the lines along which the Ku Klux Klan works. They are lines of almost universal prejudice. The question of foreign and native born! Men are either for immigration or against it. Few are willing to carefully consider it and clearly discern between desirable and undesirable immigration. Take the question of race and color. For fifty years it has followed partisan lines. The majority of those north of the Mason-Dixon Line have censured the South and stood, if not for black supremacy, for at least equality. Those south of the Mason-Dixon Line for the most part have stood for the supremacy of the white, and have utterly repudiated every suggestion of social equality. But the Mason-Dixon Line is crumbling. Increasingly, men north of the line are giving intelligent consideration to this subject, and are beginning to realize the great problem with which the South has been burdened from the days of the Civil War, and men south of the Line are more and more considering the subject, and have begun to realize

increasingly that to accord black men the rights and privileges that are in the constitution of our government is the wisest course, even for their own sakes.

Thirty years ago I was a young pastor in Indiana. I had in my official Board a deacon who was at once the bane and blessing of my life. His knowledge of the Scriptures was a marvel. When first I heard him pray, alarm took possession of me. For ten minutes he stood before the congregation and prayed, and every single word was a direct quotation from the Book. My own knowledge of the Word suffered by comparison and I wondered how I could ever minister to him. I learned shortly, however, that he was a sweet and humble soul, perfectly willing to sit at my feet. There was one point on which we were not in accord—the race problem. He seldom spoke without bitterness. His criticism of my own people in the South, was difficult to bear, and I was not always silent. Finally age and ill health sent him to Florida for his winter seasons. After two or three of these vacations, our controversy was at an end. He came to be a stalwart defender of the southern white man and entered into a keen appreciation of Dixie's great problem.

Personally, I have never been able to entertain the prejudice against the colored man that certain people both north and south of the Mason-Dixon Line indulge. As a lad I entered into sharp controversy with my seniors over the circumstance that the negroes attending our church were not organized into a Sunday School class and taught, but left instead to sit in the gallery and pick up the crumbs from the white man's Bible table.

But the philosophy of social equality is not desired by the negro, himself, and is a vain philosophy when preached by the white man. Thomas Dixon, Jr. in "The Leopard's Spots" showed the absurdity of that position by his illustration of the Boston millionaire who preached the doctrine but was outraged and enraged when the colored man he was housing, fell in love with his daughter and approached him to request her hand at the altar.

At any rate, why should we insist today that this is purely a color question. The very law of the Jew forbids him to marry a Gentile. That is not at all an injustice to the Gentile. Any people and race have a right to determine who shall be their social friends and what shall be their family life and character.

The Japanese and the Chinese are not black, and yet intermarriage with the Caucasian only occasionally occurs and always with social protest. If one would study Old Testament prophecy, he will find that from the very beginning there were laws of God which opposed the coalition of the descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth, and prophecies and promises as to their separate and somewhat exclusive existence. True, the Bible itself teaches that "*God ** hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth*", but the same Bible is just as explicit in opposing intermarriage of the races.

Science has spoken with Scripture in this matter and you will not find the descendants of utterly diverse races healthy, happy and prosperous. Disease smites them, moral and social disorders make easy headway among them; and the mongrel man,

like the mongrel beast, finds it difficult to make his way in the world.

Personally I believe the Christian position is to have no prejudice against a man because of birth, color or condition; to see in every human soul one for whom Christ died, and by that fact he becomes a brother, potentially or actually. But even that does not decide questions of marriage, nor settle social and political standing.

The Jap has had a hard time on the Pacific Coast, not because he is dishonest, not because he lacks in frugality, not because he is black, but solely because he belongs to another race. White people who discuss the race question, thinking it involves no one except the Caucasian and African, are needlessly agitating and creating false impressions upon the minds of our black brothers, an impression liable to breed danger and difficulty. In Texas the race question is not black and white, it is Mexican and American. In California, it is not black and white, but Oriental and American. In Alaska it is not black and white, but Indian and American. In New York it is not a question of black and white, but a question of Gentile and Jew, or of Protestant and Catholic, race and religion.

The man, therefore, who talks on the race problem and means only the social problem of black and white, needlessly narrows his discussion and ignorantly agitates a question which requires placation. The one thing that holds in check today the strained relations between the black and white man is the fact that the former has in his midst some great Christian leaders who see this subject in its true light, and the noblest among the whites

approach it after the same manner, and in such leaders only we have our safety.

Turning to our text again, **It looks to stability of conviction.** The sorest need of the Twentieth Century is that of men who can come to conclusions and stay by them. I am not at all ready to accept all for which the Ku Klux Klan stands. If I were, I might join them. Concerning the things which I cannot accept I shall speak later, but for the present let me go with you through their declaration of faith.

1. We magnify the Bible—as the basis of our Constitution, the foundation of our government, the source of our laws, the sheet-anchor of our liberties, the most practical guide of right living, and the source of all true wisdom.

2. We teach the worship of God, having in mind the Divine command, "*Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God*".

3. We honor the Christ, as the Klansman's only criterion of character, and seek at His hands that cleansing from sin and impurity, which only He can give.

4. We believe that the highest expression of life is in service and in sacrifice for that which is right; that selfishness can have no place in a true Klansman's life and character; but that he must be moved by unselfish motives, such as characterized our Lord the Christ and moved Him to the highest service and the supreme sacrifice for that which was right.

If I had to choose between joining the Ku Klux Klan and the liberal wing of the Baptist denomination, I would unite with the Klan. Count me

with the people who "magnify the Bible as the basis of our Constitution, the foundation of our government, the source of our laws, the sheet-anchor of our liberties, the most practical guide of right living, and the source of all true wisdom". Higher critics deny the Deity of Jesus Christ; if I interpret the Klansman's faith correctly, he affirms it. Here again I can give him fraternal hand-clasp. "We honor the Christ—as the Klansman's only Criterion of character, and seek at His hands that cleansing from sin and impurity which only He can give."

In my judgment men who would take Christ away from the world are the enemies of God, good government, and the peace of the whole people.

There are certain secret orders which believe in God, but never hint whether they believe in Jesus Christ or not. It would be impossible for me to unite with any such. Secret-order Unitarianism makes no more appeal to me than does the Unitarian Society. The circle that rules Christ out or that even treats Him with silent neglect, is not the circle for a Christian man.

If I have read the history of my country intelligently, its every single superiority is the direct product of Christian influence. Any movement that dishonors the Head of the Church and discredits loyalty to the ritual of revealed religion as found in the Word of God, is inimical, dangerous, deadly!

But I must not dwell too long upon our first point.

THE APPEARANCE OF EVIL

Here again the text is clear and, its application

to the subject in hand, patent. "*Abstain from all appearance of evil*". Let me urge now some objections to the Ku Klux Klan. In my judgment the most serious one is that its members go abroad with covered faces, hooded, disguised. I know in this they are not alone, as all men know. The "Lutheran Witness", after having paid proper compliment to the "Philadelphia Ledger" for an *expose* of the Klan, says, "Still we cannot help but ask, Why single out the Klan for an *expose* while the country is infested with other gangs, or klans, just as dangerous and pernicious? Why rail about the blood-curdling oaths while other societies are bound and tied, fettered and shackled by oaths every bit as blood-curdling? Why complain of the Klan's blasphemous ritual, which parodies Christian Baptism, while the rituals of all the other secret organizations either expunge Christ Himself, or, if using His Name, blasphemously deny His Divinity and redemptive work, putting Him on the same level with pagan teachers of morality? Why accuse only the Klan of fostering religious and racial hatred? Are not the Knights of Columbus Klan and the Klan of the Junior Order of American Mechanics doing the self-same thing, the former excluding and combatting all Protestants, and the latter all Catholics and foreigners? Why poke fun at the silly titles of the Klan's officers, while the officers of all other sworn secret societies strut about with titles such as 'Worshipful Master', 'Illustrious Potentate', and so forth, titles so foolish and silly and ridiculous that even a brass monkey would be convulsed with laughter if he were able to exercise his brain, or his sense

of humor, a bit more than the average lodge-member who takes himself seriously? Why hint at the danger of the Klan's secrecy while millions of lodge-members in this country are just as secretive, allowing admittance to their meetings only by password, assembling behind locked doors, and shunning the light of publicity, and so forth." In fact, this discussion of the "Lutheran Witness" condemns the Klan where it should be condemned, but shows itself a discernor of spirits by including with it many other secret orders open to the exact same criticisms.

Secrecy itself is open to criticism, criticism of the severest sort. Christianity certainly has little in common with it. Of Christ's whole ministry it was said, "*This thing was not done in a corner*". He and His disciples moved in broad day light; and when their night meetings occurred, they were not for planning or plotting, but for praying. In the street, in the synagogue, everywhere, He went with unveiled face. His entire life was as open as the pages of a book; and when finally His enemies went into the Garden—His secret trysting place with God—to take Him captive, and accord Him criminal treatment, He shamed them by His question, "*Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take Me? I sat daily with you teaching in the Temple, and ye laid no hold on Me*". His was an open life.

My candid judgment is that the world would be better off with the abolition of every secret order. But if there exist secret orders in the Papacy; if there exist secret orders among the colored people and the Jews, there is no possible opinion or

power that will keep Protestants from meeting order with order, or Whites and Gentiles from doing the same. I have no doubt there will be many go out from this place grieved, and perhaps disgruntled, because I have declared against secrecy. But the same men will admit that the very secret orders against which they are now organizing their own, imperil the Nation. It is currently reported that a great Papist order in this city have their commands from their highest authority as to whom they should vote for at the poles the coming week. If that be true, we know their oath-bound allegiance and we may expect to see in the headlines, the political success of this secret society candidate for the Judge's bench.

Secrecy has more than the appearance of evil, it expresses evil itself.

It makes an open way also for hypocrites and pretenders. If every Klansman of the Ku Klux Klan could keep absolutely their just and righteous law, to abstain from all violence and refrain from all mobs, other men can easily don the same disguise and do evil deeds to the discredit of the organization, to over-throw of law, and the injury of society. The "Literary Digest" for August 27, 1922, had an extensive article on "The Reign of the Tar Bucket" in which it stated, quoting from the Houston Dispatch, that there were forty-three tar and feather parties in the first six months of the year, and in one instance a white woman was the victim. In another case the initials K K K were branded on a negro's face. In Missouri a sixty-year-old farmer was whipped by a mob, and in Florida an arch-deacon of the English Episcopal Church was both

whipped and tarred and feathered. The majority of these crimes are credited to the recognized Ku Klux Klan. "Anarchy is terrifying the State with a bucket of tar and a sack of feathers." According to the Springfield Republican no discrimination is made as to race, color, sex, or nationality.

That some of these mob outrages were committed by the Ku Klux Klan seems fairly likely, since the charter of the Bonham, Texas Klan was revoked by His Majesty of the Imperial Wizard, Emperor of the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan. But what assurance can people have that the expulsion will end this conduct since as one man said, "No man up in Atlanta can keep us from putting sheets over our heads and taking the law into our own hands if we desire to." Certainly not! That is what disorganized the old Ku Klux Klan. When they saw that they were being imitated, and their organization was being abused, they did the wise thing of going out of existence, thus throwing the blame of such conduct upon men that were guilty of it. The very form of disguise is one that takes deep hold upon the superstitious fears, native to many people. On that very account it is easily copied and readily abused. Let the text speak: "*Abstain from all appearance of evil*".

But there is a deeper point yet in the text—**Such abstinence tends to safe-guard the soul.** The appearance of evil is a near approach to evil itself. I heard some years since a story that I was quite ready to believe. In the great Passion Play of Oberammergau, a man had been chosen two or three successive times to play the part of Judas.

He was a Christian and all his soul revolted at the very thought, but having taken a pledge with his brethren to accept whatever was assigned him, he went through the rehearsals, revealing matchless talent, and impersonated Judas to perfection. For the fourth time, if I remember correctly, they were selecting the actors and once more the lot of playing the Judas part fell upon him. Bowing his face in his arms he burst into tears, the whole building resounded to his sobs, as he said, "How can I, again, seem to be the enemy of my Lord?" Human experience, as a rule, runs in the opposite direction; the man who appears to be what he is not, finally becomes what he appears. In my judgment, the most remarkable book published in recent years was that of Robert Louis Stevenson, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde"—a book that illustrated perfectly a great fact of human experience, namely, that character and conduct will finally come together; appearances and experiences are eventually united, and if in a hooded company a man, riding the country over, appearing dangerous and terrible, be long continued, both danger and terror become the result. To the text then, "*Abstain from all appearance of evil*".

But finally, to our third point

THE BLAMELESS PRESERVATION

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ".

These warnings reveal the Apostle's interest. Had he not been writing to men he loved he would have said less to them. His warnings would have been of a less ardent character. There may be

those who will go out from this room to-day seriously resenting my indictment of secrecy, and hidden faces, and terrifying appearance and mob acts; but if so, they will be shallow and thoughtless.

I believe in the race to which I belong. I believe in it profoundly and love it with an ardent affection. In spite of my name there is not a drop of Papal blood in my veins, nor can I trace my ancestors far enough back to find one drop in the veins of any of them. Five generations ago Henry Riley came from Protestant North of Ireland to Culpepper Co., Va., and in that State and its adjacent one, Kentucky, my fore-fathers lived and wrought, Protestant to the core. They were Baptists and Methodists and Presbyterians and Christian Church men, and on my mother's side, they were Quakers. But only in one or two single instances, resulting from putting orphan children into Papist schools, have I ever known them to be Catholic.

I believe in Americanism, and yet I would not join the Klan wholly at this point. There are a great many men, born on other shores, that I prefer to fraternize with rather than with some of them born in this land. I heard a Scandinavian say a few days since, "When an American twits me, I answer, 'You came to this country because you could not help yourself. I came to it from choice, having admired it beyond my own fatherland.'" And when I am charged with having come to it a mere immigrant and in rags, I answer, "That was far better than the condition in which you came; for when you came you did not have a rag upon your back." I am

inclined to think that Ward Beecher, when he would "throw wide open the gates" made mistake. I believe every alien opposed to American government ought to be deported; but I would go further yet, and take the native-born rebel and assign him to some island of the northern seas. I cannot say with the Klan, "America for American born," but I do stand for Americans in spirit; and I hold that this is the proof of the love of my land.

But our text makes a most Christian appeal. *"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless"*. This is a Biblical phrase but involves a sound philosophy. Man, like God, is threefold in nature, body, soul, spirit. In the sight of God, and in the sight of his fellows, the entire man should be preserved. The **body** was made to be a temple of God and should for ever be held sacred on that account. That means it should have the proper physical attention; that means it should have the proper moral environment; that means that it should be indwelt by the Spirit Himself. The soul of man—that is, his intellect—is not worthy of worship (as we so well heard from Mr. Bryan two weeks ago this morning), but worthy of culture, capable of development, matchless in its outreach, deserving of the deepest concern. **Spirit**—that is the immortal part—that is the God-breathed feature of human life, that is the life of God Himself in the soul, that is man at his best; the body, the soul in excelsis, let it all be preserved blameless.

But to conclude, the Apostle touches upon another theme:

He plainly declares the re-appearing of Christ.

"Unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ". Paul, then, was a premillennialist! Certainly! How any company of men who believe God and His Book could be otherwise is past my comprehension. God's plan looked not to the first appearance of Christ only, the substitute for sin, but to a Second Appearance of Christ as well, the world's Saviour, the Prince of Glory, the Coming King.

The Klansmen have said, "We honor Christ as the Klansman's only criterion of character, and seek at His hands that cleansing from sin which He alone can give." And the Book teaches that *"once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He Appear the second time without sin unto salvation"*. To honor the Christ truly is to entertain that hope.

Dr. I. M. Haldeman, New York's matchless minister, recently said, "No man can faithfully preach the Second Coming and neglect any doctrine of the Word. No man who believes in the imminent Coming of the Lord, and knows how to preach it, will ever be guilty of denying the inspiration of that Word, the resurrection of the body, of the glory and necessity of the atonement. If any of the fundamental doctrines are neglected, as it is charged in 'modern preaching,' the neglect will not be found crouching at the door of him who preaches the Coming of the Lord."

We conclude, therefore, with the words with which we began, inspired words, worthy of your serious thought—"Prove all things; hold fast that

which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ".

CHAPTER XV.

II THESSALONIANS

II THESSALONIANS

AN OUTLINE

The Apostle's salutation:

"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

"Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

"So that we ourselves glory in you in the Churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

"Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer" (Chap. 1:1-5).

THE REVELATION OF THE SON FROM HEAVEN

The Coming of the Kingdom.

"Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you" (1:5, 6).

The Appearance of the King.

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with His mighty angels,

"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power;

"When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to

be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (1:7-10).

The appeal to the saints.

"Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power:

"That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:11, 12).

THE REVELATION OF THE MAN OF SIN

The Second Coming is not timed.

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him,

"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the Day of Christ is at hand" (2:1, 2).

The apostasy of the Church will precede it.

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

"Remember ye not, that, when I was with you, I told you these things"? (2:3-5).

The anti-Christ is already at work.

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His Coming:

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved.

"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

"That they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2:6-12).

THE RELATION OF SAVED AND SINFUL

The chosen are encouraged to steadfastness.

"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth:

"Whereunto He called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our Epistle.

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

"Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work" (2:13-17).

The Lord alone can establish in faith and works.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:

"And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

"And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (3:1-5).

Separation is essential to true saintship.

"Now we command you, brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

"For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

"Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

"Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

"For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

"Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

"But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

"And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

"Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (3:6-15).

CONCLUSION:

"Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

"The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle: so I write.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (3:16-18).

CHAPTER XVI.

**WORLD CONDITIONS, THE CHALLENGE
OF THE CHURCH!**

WORLD CONDITIONS, THE CHALLENGE OF THE CHURCH!

II Thessalonians, Chapter 2.

THIS second chapter of Thessalonians, following as it does close upon the first Letter written to this people, was evidently intended to correct certain misjudgments, particularly the impression that the day of tribulation had already come and that the Lord was immediately to appear.

It would yield to the careful student as many suggestions that would easily fruit in sermons as has been brought, or might be brought from the first Epistle.

The limit of time, however, lays upon us the necessity of this briefer treatment, and at the same time provides us an opportunity to discuss a theme that presses for consideration, namely, "World conditions, the challenge of the Church".

Paul, while writing to the Thessalonians concerning matters of immediate concern to this first century anticipates, also, our far off time of the twentieth century, and we predict some surprise as we see how perfectly his prophetic insight presaged the problems of our age. When a few days since, as a result of reading newspaper and magazine articles, this theme emerged from my mind, it came with what I believe to be a suggestion of the Holy Spirit, namely, that the adverse world condition of the present hour was a poor defense of spiritual impotency in the Church of God; and instead of surrendering to those conditions, we should suc-

cessfully resist and rise above them! To impress that thought is the object of this sermon.

However, we propose to frame an outline from what Paul writes into this second chapter and to follow a logical interpretation of this Scripture to the natural conclusions.

The true student of the second chapter of Second Thessalonians will consent, we are sure, to this series of suggestions: The Close of the Age, The Antichrist Revealed, The Challenge of the Church.

THE CLOSE OF THE AGE

The Second Coming of Christ will close the age.

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him,

"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the Day of Christ is at hand" (vss. 1, 2).

Or, as some have translated it,

"The Day of the Lord is now present"!

It may be conceded, without controversy, that "*the day of Christ is at hand*"; but "*the Day of the Lord*" is a technical phrase in Old and New Testament and refers to that millennial day in which He shall reign, solitary and alone, the breaking of which day will close the present age.

There are many Scriptures that go to prove that fact. Perhaps no one of them is clearer than Paul's statement to the Corinthians, "*As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His Coming. Then cometh the end*" (I Cor. 15:22-24).

In other words, the Second Coming of Christ

closes this age. It is a truth that from the days of Paul until now, each black period, each extensive triumph of iniquity, and particularly each outbreak of martyrdom, has led many to feel that the end was on. But the mistakes of the past should not involve us in a still greater mistake for the present. In Æsop's fables the cry of "Wolf! Wolf!" became so common that the people eventually paid no attention to it. It was then that the wolf came and found no one expecting him and no one guarding the flock.

This much seems to be certain, that the present age is rapidly fitting in to the mould of Scripture; and the conditions prophetically described as belonging to the last days are manifestly present—an indication that the end may be nigh. There are people who foolishly believe that no great catastrophe will ever overtake the world again; that if a flood did once occur, a teaching they seriously doubt, the cleansing fires of prophecy will never fall, and that according to evolutionary laws man, society and civilization will continue to move along in their developing lines.

Such reasoning ignores history! Already there has been a Babylonian age, but it perished; there was a Greek culture the like of which the world has never seen, but it also crumbled to the dust; there was a Roman government that grew in power until the world itself acknowledged no other.

But now, that government, long buried and almost forgotten, is beginning to stir in its grave and to threaten a resurrection, possibly even a recovery. When Ralph Norton of Belgium was in this pulpit, three weeks ago, he quoted from one of the

leading statesmen of Europe to this effect, "We know that the age is now dying." If that be true, the Second Coming is at hand. People who are ignorant of, or indifferent to prophecy, are thereby appointed to surprise. The prophetic portions of Sacred Scripture have found literal fulfilment so often as to create a scientific certainty concerning the future of the unfulfilled portions. For instance, listen to this,

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.

"And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock.

"It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. 26:3-5).

What is the history of Tyre? It lies in ruins today. Alexander the Great actually scraped the dust from the top of it. He blew through it a causeway into the sea, and he made her as the top of a rock at which fishermen today dry their nets, as God, through the mouth of Ezekiel declared nearly three thousand years ago.

Christ said, "*I will come*". His Word will not fail; His presence should be expected; His descent to the earth will close this age.

That great event of prophecy is not yet the experience of history.

Undoubtedly many of the early disciples interpreted the language of Jesus to mean His immediate Return. But a careful consideration of what Christ said on the subject, and of all that the inspired writers of the New Testament add-

ed, demands no such interpretation. A Nobleman has gone into a far country to receive for Himself a Kingdom. In time He will return. The Householder is on a long journey. The day will yet break when He will come back to receive an account of behavior during His absence. The day of Jacob's trouble has not yet been born. The time of these things is unknown. They belong to the secrets of the Most High. Curious man has anticipated it; unwilling to let God keep aught to Himself. A thousand times man has attempted to unravel this mystery; to discover this secret; to decide the day, yea, even the very hour when the Son of Man shall arrive. It is an engaging theme. It is an opportunity for unlimited speculation and it has produced a thousand forms of fanaticism and ten thousand thousand fanatics, and the end is not yet. Christ has not come; the age has not closed; new government has not been introduced; the reign of righteousness has not begun. "*Of that day and hour knoweth no man*". Let us cease then our speculations, refrain from further fanaticism, and gladly wait and watch the Eastern sky; it will yet brighten; the Morning Star will yet appear upon its brow; the voice will yet be heard, "*Behold, the Bridegroom cometh*".

The final apostasy must precede it.

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that Day shall not come, except there come a falling away".

I will not go into details in this matter, but remind you again of recently stated facts. A great spiritual dearth grips the world! The report of a year ago was that over twelve thousand churches in America had seen no convert in twelve months!

A famous writer declared that there were sixty thousand dead churches, whose past services demanded for them decent burial. Retrenchment on the foreign field has been the necessity of many seasons. The largest denominations have marked no progress but rather suffered decline. Let us not be blind to those social conditions that have produced sin in every conceivable form; conditions that have created a break down in morality; that have incited the passion for pleasure to the point of insanity; that have grown the greed in the minds of men until bandits and racketeers exercise no hesitancy whatever when a human life is pitted against paltry dollars, to take away the first that they may lay hands upon the second; that even the leaders of the Church of God have joined the atheists of the age in denying personality to Deity, disputing the Divinity of Christ, deriding the personality of the Holy Spirit, holding to scorn the claims of authority on the part of the Sacred Scriptures, scoffing the Blood Atonement, calling it the "gospel of the shambles"; denying the necessity of regeneration and suggesting culture instead; in fact, literally joining hands with the social bolshevists and the theological atheists of the age to remove the very foundations of morality and demolish the superstructure of society! It is an age of racketeers and wreckers. The "*falling away*" is at hand; the apostasy approaches its full. The enemies of the Church of God are unlimited; the time of the traducers is on.

Charles Spurgeon speaks of the long line of portraits of the Doges, in the palace at Venice; one space is empty, and the semblance of a black cur-

tain remains as a melancholy record of glory forfeited. Found guilty of treason against the state, Marino Falieri was beheaded, and his image, as far as possible, blotted from remembrance. Every one's eye rests longer upon the one dark vacancy than upon any one of the fine portraits of the merchant monarchs. So the apostates of the Church are far more frequently the theme of the world's talk than the thousands of good men and true who adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

How true in America today; and in fact, in every so-called Christianized country of the world! The loyal man is forgotten. No matter what his position is, nor yet what his attainments or accomplishments are, he is ignored. The apostate blazes across the heavens as the meteor at night; all eyes are upon him. What does it mean? To students of Scripture it can mean but one thing, the end draweth near.

ANTICHRIST WILL BE REVEALED

"That man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition;

"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

"Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His Coming:

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them

that perish; because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved.

"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

"That they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness".

These verses bring to us hard facts that must be faced by true believers.

The antichrist is also soon coming.

The plainness of the prophetic Scripture concerning the Second Coming of Christ is such that even skeptics cannot deny their interpretation. One of the famous modernists admits that the promise of the Return is to be found upon almost every page of the New Testament, and only escapes the conclusion of the Second Coming by discrediting the veracity of the Scripture itself, and charging its authors with pure superstition.

However, the Coming of Jesus Christ, while more often referred to in the Book, is no more revealed, by the same, than is the appearance of the antichrist. They will meet on this earth, the spot selected for their final conflict. They will face one another in the presence of men for whose souls each will wager his all. As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, and as skeptics resist the Truth, so the antichrist will withstand the Christ and resist the Spirit. And as Michael the archangel contended with the devil about the body of Moses, so will Christ contend against the antichrist for the good of society, and the souls of men. Uhlhorn is famed for his volume on "The Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism" and Andrews on "Christianity and Anti-Christianity" but the conflict of all conflicts, the consummation of the centuries of conflicts,

will occur when the Christ and the antichrist, captain the world's last battle, and wage its final war!

This monstrous character is minutely described.

"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

"Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (vss. 4-7).

But for the present it is enough to know that he is the man of sin, the son of perdition, the opponent of God, the claimant of the throne and the universe, the author of all iniquity, the consummation of all wickedness, the unreconciled and unyielding enemy of the Lord.

Let no man imagine this individual as of hideous mien; let no imagination picture a man of treacherous features, combined with the beastly suggestion of horns and tail and hoof, or with the hellish mouth breathing fire. Augustus J. C. Hare is justified in calling our attention to the fact that in the frescoes of Signorelli we have "The Teaching of Antichrist"—no repulsive figure, but a grand personage in flowing robes, and with a noble countenance, which at a distance might easily be taken for the Saviour. To him the crowds are eagerly gathering and listening, and it is only when you draw close that you can discover, in his harder and cynical expression, and from the evil spirit whispering in his ear, that it is not the Christ.

There never was a time when sin-incarnate took such attractive form as now; or wrought such in-

finite havoc as today. The movement of the century is in the direction of the consummation of evil; the coming of the antichrist.

But his defeat is prophetically assured.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His Coming" (vs. 8).

Let the saints rejoice! The one reason why pre-millennialism is optimistic rests in this certainty! Our God will conquer! The gates of hell shall not even prevail against His Church. If one would see how Old Testament prophecy fits in with New Testament prediction in this very matter, let him read Isaiah 2:10-22.

The conqueror of ancient times used to illustrate his success by chaining captive kings to his chariot and dragging them after him through the streets of his capitol city. But alas, no sooner was one rebel subjugated than another had risen; so, war succeeded war and of conflicts there was no end.

Alexander the Great is reputed to have conquered all known peoples and to have wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. And yet his history is filled with opponents who rose against him and contended with him until the last breath went from his intemperate body, and he himself was slain by a sickness superinduced by sin; in other words, Satan he could not meet. Before his mailed fist this battled monarch went down to death, and the grave claimed its own.

There will be no such issue in the conflict to come, when the Captain of the Hosts of Heaven faces the leader of the hosts of hell.

If one wants to lift his spirit let him open to the Prophet Daniel and read the interpretation of the king's dream as recorded in the second chapter of that Book and see the world kingdoms rise and wane, until "*the God of Heaven sets up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people*"; or to Daniel, seventh chapter, where all the potentates of earth under the figures of beasts, have fallen, and their dominions are taken away, and their lives are cut off "*for a season*" and then, suddenly—so suddenly that it is introduced by the word, "*BEHOLD, One like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him*". And the proclamation is made, the glorious proclamation, the enheartening proclamation, the everlasting, uplifting proclamation, "*His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed*".

THE CHALLENGE OF THE CHURCH

But to complete our study.

Paul presents these great and stirring facts as a basis of appeal, an occasion of exhortation and instruction. What is our duty as we face them? What is our obligation as we reflect upon them? What is our inspiration as we seek to interpret them in the light of Sacred Scriptures, and in the face of world-conditions? Possibly these questions could be answered as we reflect upon the remaining portion of this chapter.

Our choice, in Him, is our call to His service.

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth:

"Whereunto He called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vss. 13, 14).

If it were in my power this morning to awaken in the membership of the First Baptist Church a sense of its abilities and responsibilities at the same time, what men would call miracles would surely result.

I know the days are dark. I know the times are difficult. I know that world conditions are bad, and that evil men wax worse and worse. But I also know that these facts are no sufficient excuse. They are not even a subterfuge for failures on the part of the true Church of God.

What if the picture show is popular? The power of the Holy Spirit is certainly sufficient against it. What if the auto does accentuate "the call of the wild", and carry people not only away from the church but out of the city, into country spaces? What if the multiplied places of amusement add daily to their appealing attractions? What if the wear and tear of modern methods means weariness of the flesh and compels a cry for change? What if the discouraged conditions of the churches 'round about us have shut up their sanctuaries at the night time, and left them but poorly peopled even at the forenoon service? What if 12,000 churches went through a year without a convert and 60,000 gave such little evidence of life that a decent burial is suggested thereby? What is that to us? What is it to the people who truly love God, to whom His

cause is supreme above all, who believe that by the Blood of His Son their souls were saved and that by the indwelling of His Spirit they have been sanctified? Shall they quail before these opponents or yield to their seductive whispers? God forbid!

This is a time when every man who has in him the Spirit of Jesus Christ at all should face this entire flood of iniquity, these multiplied foes of spirituality, these armies from the pit that present themselves in solid array, and say again in the language of Joshua as he assembled the tribes at Shechem and recited before them the history of Divine benefits and refreshed their minds concerning the covenant, and then declared, "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*".

The days are such that one cannot always command his house; but the individual's responsibility to God can never be shifted, and each of us can say today, "*I will serve the Lord*". Would that the people might answer as they did in that far-off day, "*God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods*".

The trouble with our Christianity is that it is costing us too little. We are putting into it too little of time and too little of money, to have for it the affection that insures its survival in our hearts.

John Wesley was one man in millions! We imagine that he must have been a great orator, judging by the movement he originated; a great organizer, judging by the denomination that he founded. But possibly nothing about him was so great as his sense of obligation to God, a sense that voiced itself in the fact that when he had thirty pounds a year as his salary, or \$150, he lived on

twenty-eight pounds and gave away the forty shillings thereby saved. When they increased him to sixty pounds, he lived on twenty-eight pounds and gave away thirty-two pounds or 640 shillings. When they increased him to ninety pounds, he lived on twenty-eight and gave away sixty-two or 1240 shillings. When they increased him to 120 pounds a year, he lived on twenty-eight pounds and gave away ninety-two pounds or 1840 shillings.

How differently we are living today! Too often, as our income increases, our personal and home expenditures are multiplied and our contribution to the cause of God is actually cut down. No wonder the church grows weak! No wonder its services languish! No wonder its converts decrease! Brethren, shall it be so with us? God forbid!

Mark again, the skepticism of this hour is only an appeal to steadfastness.

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by words or our Epistle" (vs. 15).

It is a strange day! Could any day be stranger than when a man stands in the pulpit, a professed and even a professional minister of Jesus Christ, and concludes his address by saying, as a personal acquaintance of mine, a modernist, recently did, "Brethren, I have not pleaded with you to believe in God. I have not asked you to bring your sins to be forgiven, primarily. I have not asked you to believe in the realities of the spiritual world. I have asked you to believe in yourself—in the divinity of man; in the greatness of the human soul. Men are what they are because of their fatal disbelief in their own divinity."

Think of it! An outstanding man, speaking from a prominent pulpit of one of the most evangelical and evangelistic denominations, of our day, resting his appeal upon such a basis! Oh, what an hour! The very God who bought them is denied. The very blood with which they have been sanctified is treated as an unholy thing. The very Scriptures themselves concerning the depravity of man are ignored, and the Gospel of Humanism is substituted for the revelation Divine.

You may have imagined, at times, that my views were radical; that my expressions were unnecessarily strong; but I bring you the profoundest conviction of my soul, that such skepticism is deadly; that it does divide the church of God into hostile camps; that it does imperil all spirituality, that it has brought to an end the soul-winning appeal; that it has stilled, in spiritual death, the people that accept it.

But it has not touched us! We join not the camp of the critics! We drink not from the cup of skepticism; we feed not from the table, laden with fruit of human endeavor! We hold not with Cain that we are "justified by our works"; and yet, some of us illustrate perfectly, James' word: "*faith without works is dead*"; and at the same time we give proof of the fact that our philosophy of religion is one thing and our practical daily experience of the Divine presence is another.

We have just concluded a fiscal year. The reports by Mr. Robb, our treasurer, were most encouraging. They revealed a total of gifts amounting to \$193,941.60. The clerk's report shows a membership of 3,316. By way of comparison with

others, we can secure pleasure from it. When I tell you that less than one-half of the membership, possibly nearer one-third of it has accomplished it all, put up all the money; and that one-tenth of the membership has done all the personal work that has been done during the year, we see what could be done were we all and always "*stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*".

I set before my Board last Monday night the following goals: for every organization in the church, an increase of interest and attendance; for the Sunday School an enrollment of 2,500 as against the 2,100 of the present; for accession to the church, 300 in the twelve months, bringing our net membership to 3,500 as it would; for our financial objective, every single dollar included by the budget of recent adoption, paid at the end of twelve months; and above all, for the church itself, such a revival of spiritual interest as shall accentuate the endeavor of those engaged and accomplish a resurrection for those who "have a name to live, but are dead".

Shall we do it? If so, we must realize, as Paul did, that

Our strength is not in self but in God.

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

"Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work" (vss. 16, 17).

Are we alive, this morning, to the sense of our source of supply, and if so, are we in personal touch with the same? What matters it, as to social conditions? What matters it as to the tendency of the times? What matters it as to the natural

opposition of unregenerate man? What matters it as to the tidal wave of skepticism that sweeps the world? What matters it as to the euroclydon of crime? God lives, and in Him is our resource, and He is our sufficiency.

I saw a while ago the statement of one J. B. Jones, with which I want to finish this morning's appeal. He said, "The dweller in Toronto wakes up in the morning, wants a light to dress by, presses a little switch and his whole room is flooded as with daylight. Niagara is at work for him. He goes to his bathroom and wants some hot water for washing or shaving or bathing. He presses a switch and once more Niagara answers. He wishes to talk to some one at Montreal or Chicago or New York. He rings a bell and Niagara carries the message. He boards a trolley car and Niagara whirls him down to his office door. It is a source of almost exhaustless power."

But it is a pitiful little thing beside the infinite power of an infinite God. He can meet every need. He can convert every weakness into strength; every wish, that is righteous and true, into reality; every endeavor into success!

Brethren, shall we believe in and prove it? Sisters, shall we say it and live it? We "*can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth*" us!



08-AWY-319

